This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

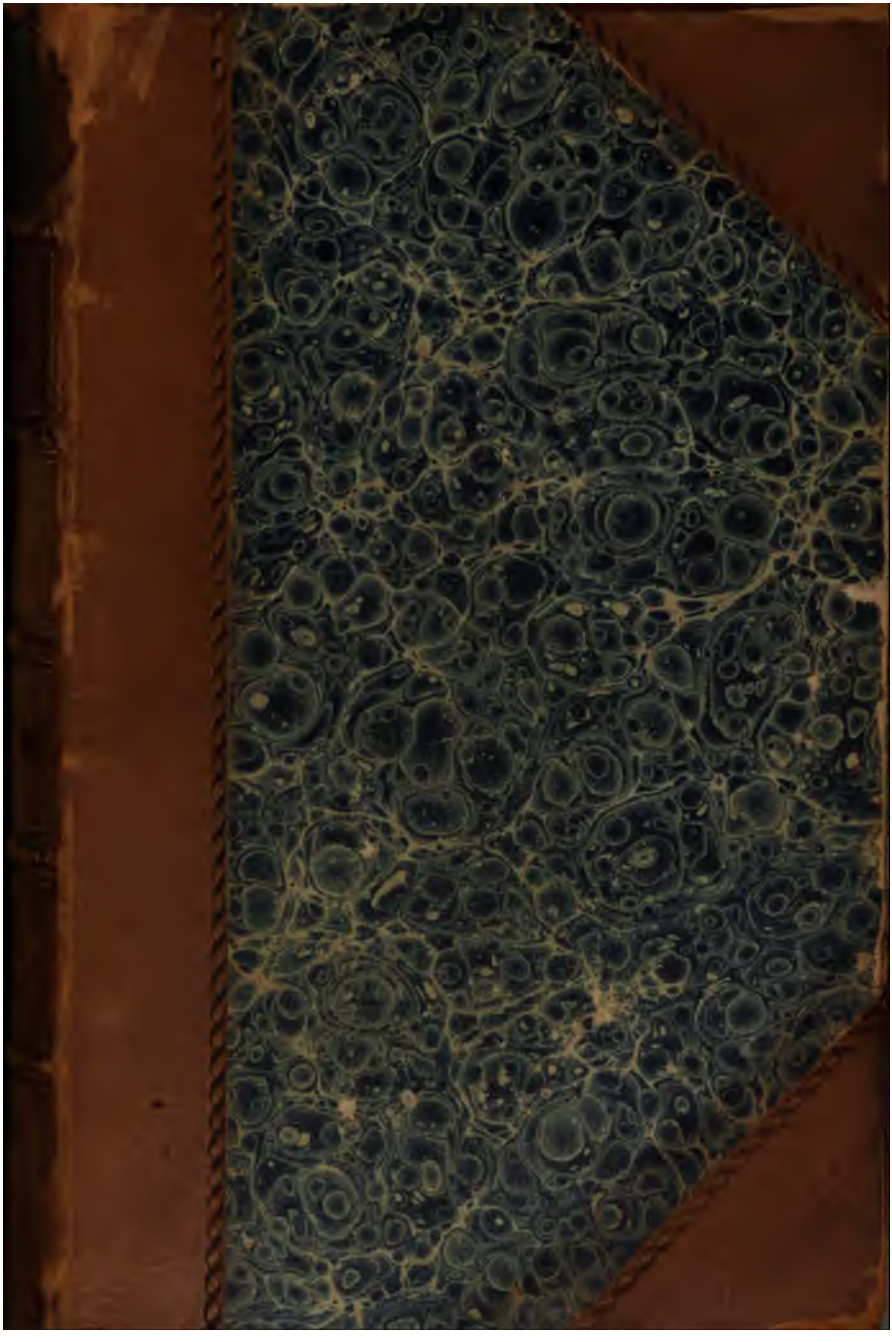
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



600008290P

41.

105.

600008290P

41.

105.

THE

CARDINAL VIRTUES;

OR,

MORALS AND MANNERS CONNECTED.

BY

HARRIETTE CAMPBELL,

AUTHOR OF

THE ONLY DAUGHTER.

The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice, and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him.——PROVERBS xxiii. 24.

Wisdom is the principal thing—therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting, get understanding.——PROVERBS iv. 7.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XLI.

105.

LONDON:
HARRISON AND CO., PRINTERS,
ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

TO

MY DEAR LITTLE SISTER CHARLOTTE,

FROM WHOSE INTELLIGENT AND JUDICIOUS CRITICISMS

THEY HAVE SO GREATLY BENEFITED,

THESE STORIES

ARE MOST AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THERE is so wide and grave a difference between sitting down to record for our own amusement ideas intended only to amuse others, and offering a contribution, however small, to the mass which is already stored up for the *instruction* of mankind, that the writer of these Stories feels very much like one who addresses herself to the public ear for the first time.

She is perfectly aware, that so much has already been done, and is perpetually doing, for the promotion of the object which this little book professes to have in view, that any additional offering from her might well be deemed superfluous; yet, if the variety of children's books be endless, the variety of children's tastes may surely be accounted endless also; and if there be one item in Morals or in Manners, overlooked by writers of superior powers, and yet enforced in these pages—if there be one boy or girl, who, having turned with weariness or distaste from books of a higher class, shall yet find his or her attention or curiosity excited by this, its appearance among the throng of competitors for the favour of the little community to which it is addressed, need not be looked upon as uncalled for.

A lifetime of intimacy with children—a keen and affectionate interest in their pursuits and pastimes, which the writer has often shared, though now, for the

first time, assuming the office of instructress—may, perhaps, prove a substitute for those more solid qualifications, in which the experienced among her readers may consider her deficient; and a familiarity with the tastes to which she addresses herself is not unlikely to succeed, where higher powers, unassisted by such familiarity, might have been apt to fail.

There may seem to be a disproportion between the subjects of at least some of these Stories, and the language in which they have been clothed—where the prattling phrase of children has been used, to convey ideas such as children are deemed incapable of conceiving; but, in this respect, the writer presumes to entertain opinions of her own. She has never found it difficult to reduce almost any of the ordinary points, either of History or of Science, to the comprehension of an intelligent child; and it is surely desirable that the ideas with which a young mind must be supplied, before its reason can find materials on which to work, should be drawn from the sacred cabinets of Truth, rather than from the jewelled caskets of Fiction.

The writer can tell, from experience, that no task is more satisfactory, than that of smoothing away from an active and intelligent little mind the difficulties which occur to it in the course of its reading; and she has, therefore, little hesitation in bespeaking the services of mammas and elder sisters, to supply such deficiencies as she may have omitted to fill up, and to explain such matters as she may have left in obscurity.

December, 1840.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

SHOWING how little people may either observe or violate all the Cardinal Virtues at once . . . 1

CHAPTER II.

Showing how the greatest of the Virtues may be violated on the simplest occasion 19

CHAPTER III.

Showing that the exercise of the Virtues always brings its own reward 27

CHAPTER IV.

Different views of Education entertained by two young Ladies.—Justice exercised in our opinions . 37

CHAPTER V.

Showing that when a young Gentleman has no desire to look like one, he has no right to be offended if he is taken for a Vagrant 66

CHAPTER VI.

PAGE

The Source of Harmony 90

CHAPTER VII.

A happy Sunday 125

CHAPTER VIII.

The Doves 172

CHAPTER IX.

The Minor Moralities 200

THE CARDINAL VIRTUES.

CHAPTER I.

SHOWING HOW LITTLE PEOPLE MAY EITHER OBSERVE OR VIOLATE ALL THE CARDINAL VIRTUES AT ONCE.

"PAPA," said Kenneth Mackenzie, after half an hour's grave reflection on the subject of the book with which he had been engaged: "why are Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance, called the cardinal virtues.—What does *cardinal* mean?"

"If you had not so soon forgotten what I told you yesterday, about the derivation of words," said his father, "you would have known that cardinal is taken from the Latin word *cardinalis*, as that again is derived from *cardo*, signifying a hinge."

"And these four that I have named are called the cardinal virtues then, because on them all other virtues turn," pursued Kenneth in an accent of surprise, somewhat tinctured with contempt. "*I* don't think them cardinal virtues at all, papa, and it seems very strange

to me indeed, that great men should ever have called them so."

Kenneth was only eleven years old, and although an excellent scholar, and a very sensible fellow for his age, yet his father could not help laughing at the oracular tone in which this opinion was delivered; and he laid down the pencil with which he was occupied at the work-table of his wife and daughter, and pursued the argument with great good-humour and indulgence.

"What is your objection to the cardinal virtues my dear Kenneth? and what would you have substituted in their place, had the bestowal of the dignity rested with you?"

"Why, papa," answered the boy boldly, "I think truth, or generosity, or bravery, or even charity, is much more worthy to be called a cardinal virtue, than any of these four."

"And do you think that *even* charity as you are pleased to express yourself, can be neglected if the cardinal virtues are in active operation? Do you think that prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, do not comprehend charity among them? ay, and truth, and generosity, and bravery too, if you would take the trouble of understanding all that is implied in each of the terms."

Kenneth looked a little puzzled. "It seems to me, papa, that these grave, *general* sort of virtues

can only be exercised by great people, kings, or heroes, or great generals, or wise lawgivers. I don't think there is any opportunity for displaying them in mere every-day life. And the reason why I think these cardinal virtues unjustly named, is because I think that what is most useful and amiable, and of most service to every one around us, is surely the chief, and ought to be called the cardinal virtue."

Mr. Mackenzie smiled, and Kenneth's mamma pinched his cheek, and called him a logician and an orator, till he blushed with the apprehension of having said something very silly; but his father resumed in a grave tone that quite reassured him.

"There is no situation in life, my dear boy, which compels any one virtue, however exalted, to lie dormant for lack of opportunity, and a very little examination would make you perceive with how much more solid advantage to mankind in general, such qualities as prudence and justice may be put in practice, than the more shining attributes of generosity and bravery."

"Well, papa," answered Kenneth, "I dare say I am very silly for saying so, and I know I have no right to express any opinion on such a subject; but I think *prudence* and *temperance* for example, very cowardly, selfish sort of virtues after all.

I don't mean temperance you know, papa, in eating and drinking; of course none but the lowest minded people neglect *that* virtue, if it is a virtue; but temperance in our affections, and in our joys and sorrows, and in our compassion for people, and all that. And as for prudence, papa," Kenneth shrugged his shoulders—"I can never believe, papa, that any but selfish people can manage to be very prudent."

"My dearest Kenneth," said his father gravely, "you are talking very foolishly. Sister Evelyn will read us the motto upon her prize-medal, and that will serve as the best answer to such a declaration."

The little girl laid down her knitting-needles, and taking the pretty gold medal from her neck, read these words.—"Prudence and good-nature are to the principles of the soul, and the feelings of the heart, what sunshine is to the flowers of summer, that without which they cannot rightly develop themselves."

"You imagine, like many superficial people," continued Mr. Mackenzie, "that prudence, because it does not in general produce any showy or dazzling effects, is a mean or worthless quality; when in fact, it is the guide, and ruler, and essence of all virtue besides."

Kenneth did not answer, and his father added,

after a little while, "I think a week's experience will serve very well to illustrate all these different opinions: what think you, Kenneth, if I undertake in a week's time to convict you of a breach of every one of the cardinal virtues, of some neglected opportunity of exercising each of those useless and abstract branches of morality, which you consider only fit for the situation of a king, or a hero."

Kenneth's remonstrance upon this threat was cut short by the entrance of the supper-tray, and his bowl of bread and milk superseded all further discussion.

The house of Kenneth's and Evelyn's father and mother was situated on the banks of a Highland loch, in a beautiful glen in the north of Scotland, and to such of my readers as may not have had an opportunity of judging for themselves in such a matter, I may as well describe how very charming a residence for a boy and girl of eight and eleven years old a Highland glen is, in the season of autumn, when all the leaves are turning yellow and red, and the little wild fields are cleared of their crops, and the snow is resting far above their heads, on the very tops of the high mountains, while the air is still warm and clear in the valleys below.

A little English girl would be quite surprised at

the bravery of a Highland maiden of her own age, and would perhaps shudder with fear, if she were to see her jumping over the rocks and crags, or clearing a noisy stream with one active spring, or climbing the branches of a hazel-tree, to gather the pretty and tempting clusters of ripe nuts, or scampering on her shaggy little pony up steep and dangerous roads, such as the little southern lady would scarcely venture over on foot, while she held her papa's hand; for there are no smooth meadows nor broad green lanes in the Highlands, and the Highlanders delight in the free air and heathery perfume which meet them upon the heights.

It happened that the morning after Kenneth's conversation on the cardinal virtues, Mr. Mackenzie had some business with a farmer at the upper end of the glen, and as little Evelyn, though she had a pony of her own, was too young to ride without her papa's especial escort, he was so kind as to announce to the children, that if they were ready at twelve o'clock, he would be happy to have their company in his ride as far as Inverlee. This proposal was a prodigious excitement to little Evelyn, for in general her expeditions on horseback were performed while her papa walked at her bridle, and it was a rare occurrence when he was sufficiently at leisure to attend her in this

way, and even then, Kenneth was often absent fishing or boating, or walking over the hills with the sportsmen, who often visited his papa, so that a ride with her father and brother both mounted beside her, was a far greater treat to my little Evelyn, than the longest drive in the carriage with mamma can be to any of the little readers who may be disposed to judge of her anticipations by their own. At twelve o'clock Evelyn was drest in her pretty green tartan habit, and the two ponies with her papa's horse saddled, and at the door. It was a beautiful morning, and Kenneth laughed heartily at the sparkling eyes and flushed cheeks of the young equestrian, as she sprang into her saddle, and pointed with her whip to the bright skies overhead, where there was not the shadow of a cloud to be seen, although Kenneth had teased her by foretelling rain in the morning. Donoch was the quietest of favourites, and he trotted along between his two companions in the best spirits imaginable, while his little mistress prattled to her father and brother, and kept them both gay with her good-humour and intelligence.

I could write a dozen pages about the beautiful road over which our little party swept in its progress to Inverlee. About the bright many-coloured foliage that overhung it, the noble hills

that surrounded them on every side, and the blue loch broken into little flashing waves by the fresh breeze of September. But in case some of my young readers may happen to know nothing about the glories of a highland autumn, and may therefore grow weary of the description, I will tell them only that Mr. Mackenzie and Kenneth and Evelyn arrived at the end of their journey, while the latter believed it scarcely begun; and the happiness of the boy and girl was not confined to the enjoyment of their favourite exercise, for Inverlee was the home of an humble friend of their mamma's, and of course whenever they went there, every manner of kindness and indulgence was heaped upon them. The dairy, the poultry-yard, and even the byre were successively visited, and the little lamb which had broken its leg by falling over a crag, and the beautiful fawn, which was a little helpless thing, fed with milk through a straw, when Evelyn was last at Inverlee, and had now grown into a stately red deer, with tall branching antlers, and a flash of pride in his eye that made her almost afraid to pat him, were severally exhibited and admired, and the luncheon of barley scones and honey-comb was just about its close, when Mr. Mackenzie returned from transacting his business with the farmer.

"Kenneth my boy," said he as he entered, "I

am sorry to say that I shall be obliged to ride a few miles further down the glen, before the matter which brought me here, can be properly arranged. I do not choose to take Evelyn so far, lest your mother should be kept in anxiety on her account; do you think I can trust you to take your sister home in safety?"

"Oh yes, papa, surely you can," answered Kenneth; "Donoch is very quiet, and I am quite able to manage both him and Angus. You may leave us in perfect confidence, papa, but I am sorry you are not to be with us."

Mr. Mackenzie saw both the children mounted, gave Kenneth many injunctions to keep the outside of the road, and to take care of the narrow turnings, and then said "good bye, good bye Kenneth, remember I commit Evelyn to your Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance."

The gaiety of the ride was very much diminished by their Papa's absence, yet Evelyn enjoyed her sober trot down the margin of the loch exceedingly, and Kenneth was very anxious to supply her with everything within the power of a polite and attentive cavalier, who finds himself called upon to act in the place of one very far his superior. He pointed out the particular linns or pools in the loch where his papa occasionally caught a salmon; took infinite pains to make her

distinguish a covey of wild ducks resting far away, in the very middle of the water, and twice over was fortunate enough to see a brace of grouse start from the heather, and skim over their heads through the air. Moreover, he told her several very pretty and curious legends connected with the localities of the glen, and at last, Evelyn almost forgot to turn her head, from time to time, in hopes that her papa might still be able to overtake them.

"What bird is that," asked she, pointing up in the air, to a little distance before them.

"That! oh, a crow, I suppose," answered Kenneth.

"No, brother, a crow cannot hang in the air, poising itself in that strange way," said Evelyn, "I could almost believe it a lark, only that it does not move its wings at all, and it is not singing; how odd, brother, that the creature should be able to keep itself in that position so far up in the sky, without fluttering its wings at all! What can it be?"

Kenneth looked keenly up for a moment, and then exclaimed, "'Tis the old gled by all that's lucky; don't you remember Evelyn of papa saying, that if the nest could be found, and I could obtain one of the young, I might rear it, after the directions in my book of Falconry. Dear Evelyn, let us stand for a moment, and see where he alights."

Evelyn pulled her rein, and they stood for a minute or two, watching the motions of the bird. It hovered over a little crag, well known to both of them; and then, instead of descending as they had expected, they could distinctly see him drop some object through the air from his talons, and then making a long wheel round, he recommenced his flight far over the mountains.

"Oh Evelyn dear, I must see where he has dropt it," said Kenneth, in a state of high excitement. "Wherever it is, it must be into his nest; and if I neglect this opportunity, I may never have it in my power to discover the spot again. Would you be afraid to stand for five minutes, if I were to tie you to the tree?" Little Evelyn did not much like the prospect of being tied to a tree, even in company with Donoch, the gentlest and dearest of ponies, but she was too good-natured to remonstrate with her young protector, in an emergency so pressing; so she assented at once, and in two minutes more, Kenneth had tied her bridle rein to one tree, and his own to another, and was pushing aside the brush-wood on his way to the little crag.

When he approached the foot of the eminence, he found that he had rather miscalculated its height, and that a good quarter of an hour would hardly take him to the top and down again.

He hesitated for a moment, whether it was safe to leave Evelyn for such a space; he turned his head, and saw the ponies standing just as he had left them, the very images of patience; the gled's nest, the object of his most anxious wishes during the whole of the past season, was within a few minutes' climb of him; it was not to be resisted, and the next moment he was skipping up the rock like a chamois. In ten minutes, he had accomplished only one half of his ascent, and in ten more, so eagerly was he searching every ledge of the crag, and every ivy bush that clung to it for the nest, that he saw the summit still high over his head. But the pursuit was so engrossing, that Kenneth very soon forgot to take cognizance of the minutes as they passed, and when at length, he was rewarded by a peep of the heads of the young birds, bobbing up and down in the nest, which occupied a snug corner, lined with moss near the top of the crag; he forgot everything else in life but the triumph, the joy of securing his prize. He lifted one of the birds with great care and tenderness, and gathering a handful of moss, made his highland bonnet into a nest, as soft and warm as the one it was leaving; and when it was fairly secured, the anxiety about Evelyn was uppermost in a moment, and he bounded from rock to rock, and over the heather, and through the brake, in half the time it

had taken him to traverse it a few minutes before. When Kenneth arrived at the spot, which, as he imagined, he had left so short time ago, his heart died within him; Angus was browzing quietly a few paces from him, but of Donoch and his precious burden, there was not the smallest trace!

Is there any boy or girl, who may chance to read this tale, and cannot find, in his or her own short experience, some situation which will enable him to guess at the sensations which swelled Kenneth's heart at that moment, till his breast seemed too narrow to contain it? Let the remembrance be a beacon to warn him henceforth, to obey no impulse, however strong or sudden, of which the gratification is purely selfish, and the consequences uncalculated.

Kenneth stood for a while bereft of motion, and every probable or possible evil which could have befallen his sister passed rapidly before him. She had never ridden a dozen yards unattended, even when upon the lawn; and now she had a long mile to go before reaching home, over a narrow and steep road, where one false step, or one startled motion of the pony, might fling her over a precipice among rocks and trees. Kenneth could not contemplate the horrors which presented themselves—little Evelyn wounded and bleeding among

the cliffs, and Donoch wandering home alone, to shock and terrify his mother almost out of reason. For the position of the sun warned him that he had been longer on his mission to the gled's nest than he had imagined, and that there was ample time for all this mischief to have befallen, before he could by any possibility be in time to prevent it.

His first impulse was to mount his own pony, and gallop off to save his mother, if possible, the alarm he had occasioned, and to ascertain whether his fears for Evelyn were groundless. Five minutes took him, pale and panting, to the edge of the lawn at home. He saw his mother walking about alone amongst the flowers, and he turned sick with the confirmation of his fears which the sight afforded him. When was mamma ever alone when Evelyn could be with her? The next moment he had turned the pony's head, and was once more at full speed on the way to Inverlee. Short as was his ride back to the fatal tree, it was in itself, with all the horrible images for which it afforded time, a sufficient punishment to Kenneth of the error he had committed; but its consequences were not destined to stop there. Before he had quite reached the gled's crag, something attracted his eye far down among the rocks beneath—another look revealed to him Evelyn's green veil, which fluttered upon a bramble half

way down the precipice; and he no longer doubted that his dear little sister had been carried down the terrible declivity, and left her veil behind in the descent. In another moment he was on his feet, and plunging over the steep rocks and tangled bushes which divided him from the margin of the loch.

The autumn sunset was falling duskily around, and every object was becoming gradually indistinct, when Mr. Mackenzie rode quickly along the road, and had just approached the spot already so distinguished in this history, when he was arrested by a dark object lying upon the ground. He pulled up, and recognised his son's cap filled with something which the darkness would not permit him to see correctly: he dismounted, and picking it up, discovered the young gled in its shelter of moss; at the same moment Angus raised his head from the grass which he was nibbling, and neighed, as if he would have said, "I am here, and very anxious to get home." Mr. Mackenzie was at first very much alarmed, but in a few minutes the truth dawned upon him, and Kenneth's absence was the only circumstance for which he was unable to account. He immediately conjectured that Evelyn had been allowed to go home alone, and that Kenneth had gone in search of the nest. But the bird being here, where

Kenneth now was still remained a mystery. While these thoughts were passing in his mind, Mr. Mackenzie's ear was attracted by a faint whistle, which seemed to come from the hollow beside the lake, and his first impulse was to seek Kenneth in the direction from which it proceeded. With a little trouble he reached a flat green ledge, where he found Kenneth stretched upon the grass under a projecting rock.

"What are you doing here, Kenneth, and where is your sister?" asked Mr. Mackenzie, in a voice which was somewhat more stern than usual.

"Oh, never mind me, papa—go and seek for Evelyn, please—please," answered he in a tone of great distress; and the next question elicited the complete detail of his folly, and the manner in which he had abused his father's confidence.

"Donoch has carried her straight home, I have no doubt," said his father; "get up, and let us ascertain this fact, before we say anything of your misconduct."

"I am afraid, papa," said Kenneth, in a voice which faltered a very little,—"I am afraid I have hurt my foot. I was not able to stand upon it, or, you may be sure, I would not have been lying here while Evelyn was missing."

The foot was indeed terribly swollen, and Mr. Mackenzie had little difficulty in discovering that

the ancle was dislocated. He had fallen over some loose stones, and twisted it under him. His father carried him to the place where his pony was feeding, and placed him on it with great care and tenderness; and, although he suffered extreme pain from the motion of the horse, and the hanging position in which he was obliged to hold the limb, yet he uttered no word of complaint, until they reached the gate of the avenue; but when little Evelyn and her mamma came bounding through to meet them, the relief was too much for poor Kenneth, weakened as he was by suffering of mind and body, and he burst into a passion of tears.

The next evening, when Kenneth's ancle had been set and bandaged, and a sound sleep and a day of rest had somewhat recruited him, his mamma had him carried on a little couch into the drawing-room, and he lay in the midst of the circle very easy and comfortable. Every one was anxious to relieve him, and amuse, and be kind to him, and his fault seemed to have been entirely forgotten in sympathy for the weight of his punishment.

"Well, Kenneth," said his papa at last, with a smile, "how many of the cardinal virtues did you violate yesterday?"

"All the four, papa," answered Kenneth gravely, "if I had not, I should not be in pain to-night."

"What, all four at once?" said his father.

"Well, my boy, it is true bravery and true generosity, to confess a fault as it ought to be confessed. Let us hear how you managed to violate all the cardinal virtues at one and the same time."

"Why, papa," said Kenneth, in a tone of humility, "if I had been *prudent*, I should not have for an instant dreamt of leaving Evelyn by herself; if I had been *just*, I should have known better how to keep my promise to you, and how to prefer my sister's safety to my own gratification; if I had been *temperate*, I should have asked whether Evelyn had returned or not, and taken others with me to seek for her, who would have known more about it; and as for fortitude, papa"—and the tears swelled over Kenneth's black eyes again, and cut short his sentence.

"You have not only very nobly but very wisely proved all the rest, dearest Kenneth," said his mamma, as she bent over to kiss his forehead; "and on the score of fortitude, I am here to attest that no veteran on the field of battle ever submitted more gallantly to an operation than you to the replacing of your ancle-bone last night, although I strongly suspect the pain it cost you was enough to prevent you for some time from forgetting your violation of the cardinal virtues."

CHAPTER II.

SHOWING HOW THE GREATEST OF THE VIRTUES MAY BE VIOLATED ON THE SIMPLEST OCCASION.

It happened a few months after the ride to Inverlee, which we have described in the last chapter, that Sir Neil Mackenzie, the uncle of Kenneth and Evelyn, had occasion to take a voyage to the West Indies, and previous to his departure, he begged Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie, Kenneth's and Evelyn's papa and mamma, to take charge of his daughter Flora and his two boys Roderick and Hector, during his absence.

Accordingly, as soon as the spring was far enough advanced to admit of their undertaking a journey from London, the three young people came down to Glenlee, that they might be placed under the immediate charge of their uncle and aunt, and prosecute their studies in company with their young cousins.

It was a very fine thing, indeed, for Kenneth to have two playfellows so near his own age, and nothing could be more delightful to him than the prospect of their arrival. But to little Evelyn, who was a remarkably gentle and timid child, and who had never known any playfellow but Kenneth, nor any companions but her kind

mamma and her indulgent papa, the anticipation of her cousin Flora's arrival seemed to carry in it something a little alarming.

Flora had been for some time at a fashionable boarding-school, and though only ten years old, she was represented to her Scotch friends as having quite outgrown her years in every branch of education, and as outshining all her little companions, both in beauty of person and elegance of manners. Little Evelyn was far too modest and gentle for any such idea as that of a jealous rivalry with her cousin to have any place in her mind; but her secluded life and the extreme delicacy of her health, when a child, had both united to produce a degree of shyness in her disposition, which rendered the company of strangers at all times a trial to her, and could not fail to represent as doubly formidable the appearance of one with whom she was about to enter on habits of close and immediate intimacy. She could not help laughing very joyously when her dear nurse, Margery, used to describe the pleasure that was in store for her, in displaying all the treasures of the garden and the poultry-yard to her new friend, and she assented with great meekness to her mamma's predictions of the benefit she should derive from pursuing her studies in company with a schoolfellow so clever as Flora; but

still, when the letter came which announced their arrival at Glenlee, for the following night, little Evelyn looked very pale and thoughtful for several hours after it had been read aloud to her, and stood beside her mamma's work-table a long time without speaking a word.

But Evelyn had always been accustomed to consider her mamma as her very best and most intimate friend, and anything which engrossed her own mind was sure, sooner or later, to be confided to her; for the timidity which often kept Evelyn from opening out her mind to her papa, much as she loved to sit upon his knee and listen to his pleasant droll manner of explaining things to her, was never strong enough to induce her long to hide from her dear mamma any subject of great interest or importance. Accordingly, after standing, as I have said, a long time in silence beside the work-table, she said very gravely,

"Mamma, which of the cardinal virtues do you think I have the least of?"

Now it happened that since the eventful ride to Inverlee, the cardinal virtues had been in great repute in the household, and the children had made it a sort of playful rule to judge all their faults and their good deeds by the standard they afforded.

Evelyn's mamma smiled at the question of her little girl, and answered very kindly,

"I think my Evelyn might almost find that out for herself; let me see whether she is wise and brave enough to detect her own faults."

"Oh yes, mamma," answered Evelyn, blushing, "I know what you expect me to say; and I know that it is quite true I am a great coward, and have no fortitude to bear any thing that happens to me; but then *sometimes*, mamma, when I have a very very strong motive to induce me to bear them, even you yourself admit that I can bear very heavy trials of fortitude."

"Well, dear Evelyn, we must inquire next into the nature of this very very strong motive, before we can decide whether the fortitude produced by it is of any value or not," replied Mrs. Mackenzie.

"Why, mamma, you remember in the autumn, when Kenneth and I took that terrible ride from Inverlee, and you told me afterwards that his greatest misfortune would have been spared if I had only been able to muster fortitude enough to dismount from Donoch, and walk home alone, or to hold him by the bridle till Kenneth came down from the crag. You allowed, dear mamma, that this would have been a great exertion of courage in me to make; yet I am quite

sure that *if I had known* all the pain and misery I should have saved Kenneth from, I could have done it, mamma," and little Evelyn looked up to her mother while her face grew pale with the eagerness of her appeal.

"I believe you, dear," answered her mother, "there are very few things which I should despair of your *attempting*, at least in the cause of those you love, and few higher motives can actuate you than those of sisterly affection. But there are some, my Evelyn, which are higher still, and you proved that eventful night that these highest of all motives were insufficient to provide you with the fortitude which your duty demanded; can you tell me what they are?"

"I do not remember," said Evelyn, after a pause, "I cannot recollect another instance in which I showed a want of fortitude that day, mamma."

"Try again, dear; this instance did not occur during your ride, it was in the evening when Dr. Macleod came to replace the bone of Kenneth's ancle."

"Oh! now I recollect," said Evelyn with a deep blush, "I remember that I refused to obey you, and leave the room while the operation was going on, and that very soon afterwards I fainted in your lap, mamma. I know it was very silly to give myself leave to indulge these feelings at the

very time that you were trying to command your own. The motive of saving you the additional pain of my fainting fit ought to have been strong enough to control me. Yes, dear mamma, I know this to be a stronger motive than even my love for Kenneth; but indeed, indeed, I forgot all about the annoyance it was to cost you, mamma."

"My dear little Evelyn," said Mrs. Mackenzie, "I am not afraid that your affection for me will ever fall short on any emergency; but this is not the motive which I desired to point out to you as strong enough to call forth your powers of self-control,—a far higher and holier principle than even your love for me, my child, will be necessary to enable you to command the strong and quick feelings with which God has endowed you. Tell me, Evelyn, against whose authority you rebelled that night,—whose discipline your conduct pronounced too heavy to be borne?"

Evelyn blushed deeply, and hung her head for a few minutes in silence.

"But mamma dear, I could not help fainting," said she at last, "it was so very dreadful to see Kenneth look so pale, and to hear the bone crack in that terrible manner, that I could not help fainting, and, indeed, it was very disagreeable to faint, for I felt as sick as possible when I began to recover; I could not help it, indeed, mamma."

"I know, my dear child, that you could not altogether help it, and I am not so foolish as to expect a person with very strong feelings, and a weak little body, to have as much self-control as one who has been differently formed; but no human being, my Evelyn, ought to feel it other than a disgrace, to allow themselves to be mastered by feeling, in whatever shape it may show itself,—for the moment feeling obtains the upper hand then reason is overpowered, and my Evelyn has become too wise not to know, that whenever we cease to be governed by our reason we lose all title to respect either from ourselves or others."

Little Evelyn stood very thoughtfully beside her mamma for some time, and then said,

"Is not *temperance* the virtue which teaches us to control our natural dispositions, mamma?"

"Yes, my dear."

"Then I have discovered which of the cardinal virtues I have least of; I mean, I have none at all of, mamma. They are Fortitude and Temperance, and if I do not try a little more, I shall quite grow up without any. I don't know about justice and prudence, but I think I am too young to have justice and prudence, mamma."

Evelyn's mamma stooped and kissed her tenderly as she replied,

"It is a very fair exercise of Justice, my Evelyn, when we begin to find out and to characterize our

own faults, and it is great Prudence to begin by being *just* to ourselves; and since you have made so good a commencement, I have great hopes of your soon acquiring both Fortitude and Temperance. Would my Evelyn like to have an opportunity pointed out to her now of exercising both these virtues at once?"

"Oh yes, mamma, if you please," answered Evelyn, "and indeed, mamma, I think I know what you mean already, for it was the very same thing that put Fortitude and Temperance into my own head just now, mamma; it is about my cousin Flora, is it not?"

"Yes, my dear," said her mother, "I perceive that the prospect of receiving Flora as your friend and playfellow appears very formidable to you at this moment; and the extreme shyness of your nature, and the retirement in which you have always lived, render it not unnatural that it should. You cannot have a better opportunity of improving your Fortitude, than by endeavouring to shake off your timidity and receive your cousin with freedom and cordiality; and it will be an excellent mode of exercising your Justice, to bring out all the good and to overlook all the bad qualities you may find in your new companion."

At that moment Kenneth entered the room fresh from his lessons, and little Evelyn was soon engrossed by a game of romps.

CHAPTER III.

SHOWING THAT THE EXERCISE OF THE VIRTUES ALWAYS BRINGS ITS OWN REWARD.

It was a sweet calm evening in the end of May, that our little party were gathered upon the lawn at Glenlee to await the first appearance of the travellers. In the Highlands the trees and shrubs do not put on their verdure so soon as they do in England; so my little English readers will perhaps be surprised to hear, that, even at this season, the foliage was but just coming out. But the primroses were clustering over the banks everywhere like stars, and the blossoms covered the fruit-trees till you could have fancied them loaded with snow, and the air came quite fragrant with their perfume, and the laburnum flowers were all coming out like tassels of gold among the bright green leaves, and the violets and the wild thyme sent up their perfume from the grass as you trod upon them. I am sure you must remember how charming all these things are, on the first approach of summer.

The lawn of Glenlee was a very pretty one, and the grass was mown so close that it looked like velvet; but there was something in this lawn, that made it quite the most charming one, and the

greatest favourite of little people, of any I ever saw. There was a large thorn-tree grew right in the middle of the lawn, and a garden chair was placed with its back to the stem of the tree, and the branches stretched over such a great way, and were always so covered with leaves and blossoms, that it quite made a bower by itself, that single tree; but what was far better than that, the stem and branches of this thorn-tree grew so curiously as to form a very nice little arbour far up in the tree itself, and so comfortable was it, that Evelyn's mamma would often send a little chair and her work-table up into the tree when the weather was very hot, and sit in this cool fragrant arbour during the heat of the forenoon. Evelyn was always very happy on these occasions, and used to run up and down like a little squirrel when her mama wanted anything from the house, for there was no difficulty at all in getting into the tree; you had only to step upon the garden chair beneath, and then upon the spars that formed its back, and you were in the little arbour in a moment.

But I am forgetting all this while to tell you about Evelyn and Kenneth, and their impatience for the arrival of their little visitors. Master Kenneth had established himself in the thorn-tree, on purpose that he might be high enough to

overlook the road, and so be able to announce the first peep of the carriage that appeared from the distance. Evelyn was below, walking up and down the lawn, and holding a hand of both her papa and mamma, as if she were half afraid to let them go. She looked the picture of excitement and expectation, but she kept smiling and talking as if to sustain her courage, and from time to time her mamma looked down to her and smiled, and said, "Well done, my brave Evelyn, your *fortitude* pleases me very much."

Everything looked very nice and gay this sweet evening, and Evelyn thought her cousins must like their new home at Glenlee; it seemed so very pretty and quiet. The windows were all open down to the lawn, and the nice large tea-table was arranged within looking so comfortable, and papa was so merry, and mamma was so kind, and Kenneth was so droll, that little Evelyn thought surely no one ever had such a pleasant home as hers was. At last Kenneth gave a loud shout, and declared that the carriage had appeared over the farthest-off hill in the road, and in five minutes more Evelyn's papa had lifted Flora out of the carriage, Roderick and Hector had sprung out after her, and the whole party were standing round the fire in the drawing-room.

Flora was busily answering the questions of

her aunt, so little Evelyn had an opportunity of making her own observations the while. Flora was a remarkably handsome child, and very mature and well grown for her age. She had large dark eyes, and a bright complexion, and a great quantity of beautiful black hair, which was gathered into a silk net, and only escaped here and there in a large curl. She was moreover very richly dressed, she wore a thick velvet pelisse lined with fur, and fur boots, and everything to keep her warm, just as if it had been a snowy day in January, instead of a sunny one in May; and her manners were so very easy, and she spoke to her uncle and aunt so much as if she had been quite a little woman, that Evelyn soon began to feel a sort of respect mingled with her admiration of her cousin, and to say to herself, "I am afraid she will not take any notice of such a little thing as I."

Evelyn had scarcely a moment's attention to bestow upon the boys, so deeply was she engaged in studying Flora; but she had kissed them as a matter of course, when they first entered; and now finding that they were not likely to put her courage to the test, by taking any further notice of her, she at last turned round to steal a glance at them, from her safe post at her mamma's right hand. Roderick was a tall grave-looking boy, about twelve years old, and although he was

alarmingly *grown-up* looking, yet Evelyn could not help confessing to herself, that he looked extremely good, and as if he were likely to be very kind to her, and all other weak little people who might be in want of his assistance. He was earnestly looking through her papa's large telescope, which was fixed in one of the windows, and commanded a distant prospect all down the valley. Evelyn's observations were not half so satisfactory when they were turned upon master Hector, the junior of the party, who was amusing himself in a corner of the room, watching the agitation displayed by Evelyn's tortoiseshell cat at the intrusion upon her domain of Flora's spaniel, against whose advances, backed by Hector's vociferous encouragement, her eyes flashed, and her back rose in vain. Hector was a complete contrast to his brother, a short, stout, mischievous-looking little fellow, with curly hair, and black roguish eyes that seemed as if they did not know how to do anything but laugh. Evelyn thought as she watched his bold rude movements, and his mischievous desire to plague the cat, that nothing could be more terrific than the presence of her cousin Hector, or more impossible than that she should ever be on friendly terms with him.

By the time all these remarks were finished, Kenneth announced that he had put a chair for

every member of the circle, and that he considered it high time they were sitting down to tea. Accordingly, in a few minutes, the whole party were arranged round the tea table, Flora and Evelyn side by side, and a merrier group could not have been found throughout the Highlands of Scotland. Evelyn's apprehensions that her cousin would be too clever or too accomplished to take any notice of her, were very speedily put to rest by the frank affectionate manner in which Flora turned every now and then to converse with her little cousin. She admired her ringlets, praised the colour of her dress, and what little Evelyn liked far better, assured her of what pleasure she took in the prospect of assisting her in the lessons which they were to pursue together. In short, a very little while sufficed to make Evelyn wonder what could ever have made her feel afraid of Flora, and acknowledge to herself that she already began to love her with all her heart.

The evening was far spent before the pleasant chat of the little people was half exhausted, and many were the plans of enjoyment laid for the morrow, comprehending, on the boys' side, visions of baskets laden with trout, and luncheon devoured among the far-off woods; and, in the minds of the girls, pleasant strolls over the lawn and gardens, and a free interchange of that sort of

tiny gossip which little ladies of seven and nine usually find very plentiful on a first acquaintance. At last Mrs. Mackenzie declared that there would be neither strength nor spirit left for to-morrow, unless they took time to sleep away the fatigues of to-day; so the party separated, and the little girls ascended to their bed-chamber. It was a large airy room at the top of the house, quite large enough for two little people to occupy, and yet be perfectly independent of each other. Accordingly, there was at each end of this nice long room a sweet little bed, with white curtains, and a little dressing-table, with everything else which young ladies can require, and plenty of open space for them both to move about in besides. Old Margery was standing waiting for them when they entered, and Evelyn introduced her dear nurse to Flora immediately.

"You will very soon love my dear Margery, cousin Flora," said she; "for I love her better than any one else in the world next to mamma, and papa, and Kenneth. She will assist you first, cousin, and you will find that she brushes your hair without tearing it in the least degree, and that she unties all the strings without drawing one of them into a knot; and she is so quick and clever that you will be in bed in a very little while."

"Yes, that I shall, Evie dear," answered her

cousin, "in much shorter time than you suppose. I promise you I shall have very little brushing or combing to-night—why I am half undressed already, child. Is it possible you are going, so sleepy as you are too, to undergo the torment of combing and curling to-night?"

"Oh, cousin, I should look so untidy in the morning," said Evelyn simply. "What will become of you at breakfast?"

"Perhaps Miss Flora prefers having her hair done in the morning," interposed Margery; "and she has only to get up half an hour earlier to have it all comfortable. It curls naturally, I see, so it will not be the worse for having no papers."

"Pshaw, my dear child," said Flora, as she pushed off the net which confined her hair, and huddled on her night-cap, "one would suppose you were going to dress for a ball in the morning. What does it matter what one's hair looks like in the country?" and in another minute Flora had stept out of her clothes, said good night, and her little cousin could scarcely believe her eyes, when she jumped into bed without even saying her prayers.

Little Evelyn felt very much surprised indeed, and could not at all reconcile these slovenly proceedings with her preconceived opinion of Flora, for she had been accustomed to consider such little

duties as these indispensable to a lady, and would rather not have gone to bed at all, than have gone without commending herself to God's almighty care. Her toilette occupied a far longer space of time; and Margery drew off the green riband that had held the pale-coloured soft hair back from Evelyn's forehead, and brushed it all carefully out till there was not a pile of dust left upon it, and it was as bright and shining as gold, then twisted it nicely up, and put on the cap. Then all the other little matters were gone through with equal care and attention, and at last Margery folded the little wrapping-gown round her charge, and Evelyn went over to her own peculiar cushion, and knelt down to her evening devotions.

Evelyn's mamma had always taught her to say her prayers in her own heart, to lift up her hands to God, and to speak to his great ear alone when she made her petitions for further blessings, or when she thanked Him for what had gone before. Ever since she had been a little child, Evelyn had been accustomed to pray alone, and Margery sat herself down at a little distance, and waited till her dear child had finished her duties; and when Evelyn had risen, she took off her dressing-gown, received the warm kiss of gratitude and affection, with which Evelyn was accustomed to return her cares, and then whispered her good night.

Flora was sleeping soundly, when Mrs. Mackenzie entered the little girls' room, to see them before she went to bed; but Evelyn was very wakeful, and very much disposed to detain her mamma by her bed-side, while she discussed the important events of the evening.

"Well, my darling, your Fortitude is rewarded now, is it not?" said her mamma, as she leant fondly over her.

"Oh yes, dear mamma," answered Evelyn, "I love Flora already; and I am sure I shall love her a great deal more, when you have made her quite, quite good."

"What, then, she is not quite good, although you love her so much," said Mrs. Mackenzie.

"No mamma, not quite, I think," said Evelyn, "and I love her so much, that I should like to see her altogether good; and I am wearying till you have made her so."

"Well, my Evelyn," answered her mamma, "that is being both Just and Temperate; you shall tell me to-morrow, in what respects you would have Flora improved, and I will tell you in return how I hope to see her improve you; and now good night, love, go to sleep quick, or you will not be strong enough to-morrow to practise either Fortitude or Temperance."

CHAPTER IV.

DIFFERENT VIEWS OF EDUCATION ENTERTAINED BY TWO YOUNG LADIES—JUSTICE EXERCISED IN OUR OPINIONS.

THE boys were off by sunrise, with fishing-rods over their shoulders, and wallets on their backs, furnished, by Margery's considerate care, with ample stores of bread and cheese and cold meat, that they might enjoy a gipsy dinner, under the shade of the hazels, beside one of the pretty lonely pools of the river, or far down in the deep cool valleys that lay at the foot of the mountains; for it had been all settled, that the remainder of the week was to be allowed to the young travellers to recover from their fatigues, and to make acquaintance with their new home and its inhabitants, before the serious business of study should commence.

Accordingly the young gentlemen did not consider themselves bound for this week, by any of the rules of polite society, and treated the regular hours of the family with all the contempt which such matters will incur, when they place themselves in competition with the enjoyment of a whole day spent in fishing along the river, which leapt from rock to rock in its progress down the hill,

and increased the glory of the expedition exceedingly, by the exercise it afforded the young English strangers in climbing from crag to crag, to follow it, or swinging across its narrow channel, by means of the hazel-bushes by which it was overhung.

The world was all astir, however, before the little girls left their sunny chamber, and after a short run across the lawn to gather the bunch of primroses and violets, which Evelyn was accustomed to place beside her mamma's plate at the breakfast-table every morning, they joined Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie at breakfast.

Evelyn and Kenneth had breakfasted with their mamma and papa, ever since they were quite little things; so Evelyn, though but a child of eight years old, knew all that was necessary to the manners of a young lady at table, better than those children, though they may be double her age, who have always been confined to the nursery, or the schoolroom. Flora could scarcely eat her breakfast, or keep her seat at table, so eager was her delight in gazing from the windows upon the smooth sunny lawn, and the flowering shrubs that waved over the hedge, in the beautiful garden beyond.

"How lovely those laburnums are, aunt, and the almond-trees, how pure and delicate! why they

do not look even the same colour with those in the gardens in Belgrave-square; how charming it is to be in the Highlands. I am sure I should never tire, though I spent my whole life in running up and down that lawn and garden."

"I thought you had told me last night, that you enjoyed nothing so much as your studies," answered Mrs. Mackenzie, smiling at the eagerness of the young Londoner. "I suspect they would make but slender progress, if you were confined to such a locality."

"Oh yes," answered Flora, in a tone of remonstrance; "the studies are charming, so long as there are marks to be won, and prizes to be earned; but, when one has only to learn for learning's sake, why there is no great enjoyment in that, you know, aunt."

"Well, poor Learning is much obliged to you, I am sure," said Mr. Mackenzie laughing. "It is only the marks and prizes which you esteem, I perceive. So as they can be secured, you are very indifferent upon the subject of knowledge, or acquirements."

"Oh no, uncle," answered the young scholar, "of course I should not choose to win my marks by any but fair means. For instance, I should not allow any one else to write an exercise, or translate a difficult passage for me, as I have seen

some girls do; for besides the meanness of asking for such assistance, it is a terrible disgrace to be questioned upon the subject of one's lesson, and not know it. Indeed, I would quite as soon have the *éclat* of a good examination, as the triumph of winning the prize."

"So I perceive, the triumph and the *éclat* are to have all the credit," pursued Mr. Mackenzie; "and the mere love of knowledge is not even to be allowed a place in a young lady's disposition, according to your creed. But supposing, Flora, you were set to rouse up the energies of some very lazy, or very ignorant school-girl to greater industry. What inducement would you hold out?"

"Why, the hope of excelling all her companions, uncle," replied she; "the prospect of carrying off the reward, which every one around her was striving for; and then of being praised and admired for her perseverance or her talents. Surely this is an honourable ambition, uncle; the desire of being praised for what is good."

"No, dear Flora," interposed Mrs. Mackenzie in her usual gentle manner; "we ought never to consider praise of any kind, as an *object* of ambition; our ambition, to merit the title of honourable, ought to aim at far higher things; and praise ought only to be considered as its incentive."

"And what do you consider a higher object of

ambition than praise, aunt Mackenzie?" asked Flora, half indignantly.

"The action on which the praise is bestowed," said her aunt. "Any effort which improves ourselves, or ministers to the improvement of others."

"Well," returned Flora, looking only half pleased and more than half puzzled, "I cannot see any use in trying to improve either ourselves or others, if we are not to earn the praise and approbation of others for it."

"For example," said her uncle, "I can have no motive whatever in spreading marmalade over this piece of bread and butter for you, except to secure the polite 'thank you,' which you give me in return; the pleasure of seeing you enjoy it, or the knowledge that you are fond of marmalade, and that your comfort is improved by escaping the trouble of spreading it for yourself, are nothing at all. That elegant bow, and the flattering tone in which you thank me, are all that are worthy of consideration."

The little girls laughed heartily at this droll illustration of the argument, and Mr. Mackenzie turned round to Evelyn, and asked what she thought of the motives for acquiring knowledge.

"I don't know indeed, papa," answered little Evelyn, blushing; "but I am sure, if I had no motive for learning, except the desire of excelling

my companions, I should have no pleasure at all in my studies; for you know I never excel any body."

"Well proved, my little philosopher," said her papa, as he stooped to kiss her; "and now off with you to the lawn, and see whether you can both romp to your hearts' content, without any competition at all."

The bonnets and tippets were tied, and the two happy children on their way through the drawing-room, by the French sashes of which lay the speediest way to the lawn, when a loud peal from the bell at the hall-door echoed through the house, and the voice of Mrs. Mackenzie reached them at the same time from the breakfast-room.

"Evelyn, Flora," said she, as she entered the room, where they were standing in the act of opening the windows; "you must put off your walk for a few moments, for there is old Mrs. Buchanan's carriage at the hall-door; and as this was the day she had fixed for her journey, I have no doubt she has taken the opportunity of calling on her way to bid us good bye. So come back, like good children, for a few minutes, and show yourselves to the old lady, or she will be disappointed."

"What a bore!" exclaimed Flora, screwing up her face into an expression of ludicrous discontent;

"what can have brought the old plague to pay a visit at such an hour of the day as this? Dear aunt Mackenzie, do tell her that Evelyn and I are not up yet, or that we are just finishing our bread and milk in the nursery, or that I have a bad cold, and she is nursing me. What, Evelyn! off with your bonnet already! well, I cannot help your want of taste, but I hope you don't expect that I shall prefer your Mrs. Buchanan to the sunshine; so I shall be off alone to the garden, and leave you to follow, when your respects are paid."

"Stay, my dear Flora," said Mrs. Mackenzie, interrupting her progress through the window; "I know Mrs. Buchanan is an old friend of your mother, and I feel assured that this early visit is as much to see you and your brothers before she leaves the country, as for any other purpose. I hope, my dear child, you will not be ill-bred enough to leave the house under such an impression as this."

"Well, ma'am," persisted Flora, with a slight addition to the peevishness of her tone, "I'm sure I am very much obliged to the lady for her good intentions, but I don't see why I should be expected to waste an hour of this lovely morning in being stared at, or cross-questioned by an old woman, of whom I know nothing, and who may be deaf, blind, and stupid, for all I can tell to the

contrary. A pleasant exchange, no doubt, from those sunny glades, that look just like the vales and slopes in Pastor Fido."

"I feel quite sure, my dear Flora," answered Mrs. Mackenzie, with a grave smile, "that when we are better acquainted, I shall not have to find fault with you for words so unbecoming as these; and therefore I will not stay at this moment to reprove them. But since I find there is no principle within that headstrong little mind of yours, to which I can appeal in poor Mrs. Buchanan's favour; let me place this matter for the present in the light of a request of my own. I am particularly anxious that you should see Mrs. Buchanan, and as this is my first request to you, Flora, I cannot suppose it will be refused."

"No, indeed, aunt," said Flora, untying her bonnet with good humour and alacrity. "You may be sure that on these terms, I should face Mrs. Buchanan, were she Medusa herself; but do confess now, auntie mine, is it not a martyrdom worthy of praise to give up Pastor Fido's groves, and do the dutiful part to a deaf old woman?" and she put her arm round her aunt, and looked up, appealingly in her face, as if she would have said, "There is surely some excuse for my ill-humour."

"Wait till you see dear old Mrs. Buchanan, cousin," said little Evelyn, and her face sparkled

through its blush of earnestness. "You will not think her either deaf or stupid; only make acquaintance with her this time, and I am very sure that mamma will have no difficulty in persuading you to go and see her the next day she happens to call."

"And the sun shining, and the flowers blooming, as they are at this moment?" said Flora indignantly. "I could not prefer her society to theirs, if she were the most charming old woman that ever lived since the days of Cinderella's Godmother. However, there is no use in recalling one's miseries, so here goes;" and as Flora, and her aunt and cousin, entered the room into which Mrs. Buchanan had been shown, she took some pains to compose her features into the tranquillity of good-breeding.

Mrs. Buchanan was an old lady of seventy, very thin and pale, with silver hair, shaded across her forehead, and a soft and very bright blue eye, and a tone of voice, which seemed to imply the very sweetest and kindest nature in the world. She kissed Evelyn with great tenderness, who in her turn threw her little arms round her old friend's neck, as if she welcomed her with all her heart. Then Flora was introduced, and the old lady kissed her also very kindly, and looked at her a long time with great earnestness, and then said, "She is not so like her sweet mother, as your

own Evelyn, Mrs. Mackenzie; she is her father's child."

After this slight notice of the children, Mrs. Buchanan turned towards Evelyn's mamma, and conversed with her for what seemed to them a long time, on the subject of her journey. She now and then looked towards them with a kind smile, as if to assure them they were not forgotten, and as often as she did so Flora was obliged hastily to recover herself from the grimaces of discontent and impatience in which, to Evelyn's unspeakable dismay and anxiety, she persisted in indulging. She made a thousand endeavours to escape, now fidgetting on her seat, now making remarks to Evelyn on the beauty of the lawn, and the brightness of the morning, and now watching for her aunt's eye, that she might arrest it by some signal of her desire to be gone.

At last Mrs. Buchanan held out her hand to Flora, having finished all her business with Mrs. Mackenzie, and asked her to come over and talk to her. "I am told you have been for some time at Mrs. —— School, at —— House, Miss Flora," said she. "I suppose you have been very busy during your residence there. Mrs. —— is celebrated for making very accomplished young ladies, and though you are somewhat too young to have profited by her instructions to their fullest extent,

yet I have no doubt you have made very good use of your time. Will you tell me what studies have principally engaged you, and what you were supposed to excel in?"

"I had lessons from all the masters who attended the second class," answered Flora, "and though I was the youngest girl in it, Mrs. —— expected that in another year, if I had remained with her, I should have been fit for the upper class."

"Indeed, I am very glad to hear such good accounts of your application and industry. I dare say you had plenty of business on your hands then, and are not sorry for a little recreation now at Glenlee," said Mrs. Buchanan, with a smile.

"Oh! dear no, ma'am," replied Flora, "I was not at all a hard worker; I had always plenty of time to assist some of the little girls of the lower classes, and to practise four hours a day besides."

Little Evelyn turned to her mamma, to see whether she were not delighted with such a proof of Flora's good-nature and talents, but to her surprise she did not encounter her eye at all, and Evelyn could not be quite sure whether or not it were only a smile of admiration that sat on her mamma's countenance.

"I shall expect to find you an excellent musician, with four hours' practice every day," said Mrs. Buchanan.

"I will be very happy to play to you, ma'am, if you would like it," said Flora; and again little Evelyn opened her eyes wide with surprise and admiration of her young cousin's strength of mind—she, for her own part, would almost as soon think of offering to carry Mrs. Buchanan home, as to play her the shortest little tune in the world. Flora, however, did not seem oppressed with any portion of her cousin's timidity, and, on hearing the old lady express her approval of her readiness to oblige, and her own eagerness to judge of her music, she took one of her own music-books from the stand, and seated herself at the piano with a degree of coolness which might have been envied by a much older performer.

"Do your best, my dear Flora," said her aunt, with a smile, "I dare say you have never before played to so refined a judge of your powers as Mrs. Buchanan; and remember that the best musicians make the most indulgent listeners."

The only effect of Mrs. Mackenzie's words was to produce a look of surprise and satisfaction from Flora, when she was informed that Mrs. Buchanan was herself a musician, and in another moment she had commenced a very difficult and brilliant sonata of Herz. Certainly Flora's playing was something very wonderful for a child not turned ten, for she united both taste and execution in

her performance in a very charming degree, and as none of her efforts were at all impeded by timidity or shyness, she finished her piece with perfect success. Mrs. Mackenzie was very much surprised at the unexpected proficiency of her niece, and Mrs. Buchanan, whose musical taste was of the highest order, seemed enchanted. She questioned Flora upon the particular style of music to which she had been accustomed, and named several airs from popular operas, many of which Flora played at her request, in a style which fully carried out the promise of her first attempt.

Evelyn began to regard her cousin as if she had been some supernatural being. Such accomplishments, and, above all, such self-possession in one whom she had looked upon as not very far beyond her own standing, seemed to her almost incredible; and she stood behind her mamma's chair, and gazed at Flora with an ever-increasing sense of respect and deference.

Flora on her part seemed quite in her proper element; the weariness which she had terrified poor Evelyn by exhibiting so broadly a few moments ago had all disappeared. She had forgotten that the sun shone upon the lawns and slopes, till they looked like the glades of the Pastor Fido. She did not seem to remember that she had once called Mrs. Buchanan deaf, and

blind, and stupid; in short, she seemed to have no idea beyond the desire of pleasing her kind old auditress, and she prattled to her of Mozart and Rossini, of Herz and Strauss, of Thalberg, Liszt, and Madame Oury, as glibly as if music had been the only occupation of life, and as if the ten years which had occurred of hers had all been spent in the pursuit of it.

Little Evelyn could scarcely find energy enough to admire her cousin as she deserved. "How good-natured she is! How obliging and well-bred, and all her cleverness does not make her the least proud or selfish! How kind of her to stay so long playing to Mrs. Buchanan, when she is longing to be upon the lawn!" All these reflections passed rapidly through the mind of Evelyn, as she gazed from a distance upon her gifted playfellow.

Little Evelyn was so gentle and good herself, that the idea never rose in her mind that some of the credit which she bestowed so generously upon Flora's good-nature might belong rather to the gratification afforded to her vanity by the evident delight which Mrs. Buchanan took in her music, and the praise she bestowed upon it. At last the old lady took out her watch, and said, that willingly as she would remain to listen to Flora, she must bethink herself of the journey that was before her, and not postpone her departure

too long. "I shall be absent no more than a week or two, my love," said she to the young musician, "and on my return I shall expect to see you and my little Evelyn very often at my house, and you must never come without your music-books."

"Thank you, ma'am," said Flora, "and if you are as fond of drawing as of music, I had better bring my portfolio too, I believe there are some pretty things in it."

"Come, come, my dear Flora," said her aunt, with a smile, "we must not weary your good friend with all these accomplishments. It will be time enough to introduce the drawings at a second meeting, your music has made this one very agreeable."

Flora assented with perfect good-humour, and shortly afterwards Mrs. Buchanan drew Evelyn towards her.

"I have a great favour to ask of my Evelyn," said she, in a kind voice, "and as I know she is always the first to help a friend in distress, I am not at all afraid of her refusing it. I am going to a house where I cannot take my pets with me, and there are some of them that I do not at all relish the idea of leaving behind. Now I have bethought me that my friend Evelyn would have no objection to take charge of my pretty turtle-doves for a fort-

night or three weeks, and then if she undertakes them, I shall be quite at ease respecting their safety and comfort."

Evelyn's eyes sparkled with delight, and she eagerly assured her kind old friend that the charge of the doves would be the greatest honour which she could confer upon her.

"Very well," returned Mrs. Buchanan, "then I shall tell my servant to bring them in from the carriage, where I have left them, and if the lady-dove should produce her eggs while I am away, and you are successful in rearing the young ones, dear Evelyn, the little doves shall be yours, and I will send you a pretty cage, as a mark of my gratitude for the care which I know you will take of the old ones."

So Mrs. Buchanan, after a few minutes' further conversation with Mrs. Mackenzie, took her leave, and after Evelyn had received and welcomed the doves, and seen them placed in a nice airy place in the window of Margery's room, adjoining to her own, both the little girls resumed their long-frustrated intention of walking, and were soon buried in the shady walks and alleys of the beautiful lawn of Glenlee. It was long before they were weary of diving into the shady and fragrant recesses of the little groves, where the lilac, and the almond, and the hawthorn, and the syringa,

offered them their treasures of rich and odorous blossoms, or of discussing the merits and demerits of Evelyn's little garden, and deciding upon the relative claims of a rockery and a hot-bed, or of gathering their laps full of flowers, and carrying them up to the thorn-tree, and there sitting in the shade, to weave garlands and wreaths out of the spoil, or of descending again to the sunshine, to roll or gambol over the velvet turf, without any longing for enjoyment which the air and sunshine did not satisfy.

"How much prettier your primroses are than mine, Evie," said Flora, as she pointed to the pretty wreath with which Evelyn had encircled her hat, "yours are a much nicer kind for a wreath than mine. I don't know what makes primroses grow so different."

"Yours are not primroses, dear Flora," said little Evelyn, "they are cowslips, and that is the reason they do not look so well in a wreath, they are not so easily woven."

"Cowslips, child!" repeated Flora scornfully, "do you think I don't know a primrose when I see it? Do you suppose I can mistake this white round flower, that smells so sweet, for anything but a primrose?"

"Indeed, indeed, dear Flora, you are mistaken, it is a cowslip indeed," answered little Evelyn, in

a persuasive tone. When we go in again, I will show you just such another in my Floral Illustrations; and look, there is how you may tell the difference between them. Mine grow in separate stalks, with a flower at the top of each, because they are primroses, and yours grow in one long stalk, with a great many little footstalks springing out from the top of it, so as to make a cluster of flowers, because they are cowslips; that tuft of flowers is called an umbel."

Whether the hard word at the conclusion of little Evelyn's speech had helped to enlighten Flora all of a sudden, or whether she had all along known the difference between a cowslip and a primrose is not quite certain, but Evelyn at least did not entertain any doubt of her cousin's previous acquaintance with the item in botany she had explained to her; when Flora replied with a simple "Oh! yes, I see now: I had forgotten," and then went on to another subject. But little Evelyn was not deficient in observation, and could make very good use of her reasoning powers when occasion offered, and, despite of all her veneration for Flora's extensive acquirements, she began by-and-by to discover that there were some little matters in which she was very well versed, and of which Flora was as yet in profound ignorance. For instance, when they made their way into the

kitchen-garden, Evelyn could scarcely retain her gravity at the mistakes committed by her town-bred companion. She first mistook sea-cale for celery, and then inquired how a sea-weed could possibly live in so hot an atmosphere as that in which the gardener kept his cale. Then, when Evelyn made her peep into the hot-beds, and admire the large cucumbers at the bottom of them, she laughed again at Evelyn's pretending that the beautiful transparent slices which she saw at table could possibly be cut out of a thing so coarse and dark, as that which she discerned among the leaves in the hot-bed. Then she inquired what particular sort of soil it was on which the gardener had raised his little bed for pines, meaning the bark, which all little folks who have ever lived in the country must know, of course, is only intended as a species of manure to keep the roots of the plants warm, and is in reality the refuse of a tan-pit, and no soil at all; but when Flora summed up all, and asked, with great importance and sagacity, whether the large ripe yellow melons which grew near the cucumbers were not unripe cocoa-nuts, little Evelyn did not laugh at all; she felt too much surprised by the ignorance of such a question to have room for any other sensation.

By-and-by they wandered from the garden to the poultry-yard, and here Evelyn found herself

as much in her proper element as ever. Nannie, the old hen-wife, gave them handfuls of barley to feed the fowls which came flocking round them, and Flora screamed with delight at the tameness with which they allowed themselves to be lifted, and even to eat out of her hand.

"Only think, Flora," said Evelyn, "of old Nannie being obliged to wrap up the turkey pullets in pieces of old blanket every night, in case the cold frosts should kill them, and of her feeding them with warm milk and peppercorns to keep them warm."

Flora had never seen a young turkey in her life, and knew no more of them than of sea-cale and cucumbers, but she laughed very heartily at this account, and exclaimed,

"Why, what a foolish old woman she must be!—I'm sure, I never heard of a chicken, or a duckling, that slept in blankets, and why should the little turkeys take cold so easily?"

"Because, you know," answered Evelyn, "turkeys are brought from a country that is very warm, and they cannot bear the cold frosts of Scotland; but hens and ducks are natives of a much colder country, and so they are strong birds, and don't require any blankets."

"Why Evelyn, dear, what a little goose you are!" said Flora bluntly; "don't you see that

though the old turkeys might be originally brought long ago from a hot climate, yet that *now*, the young ones must be considered natives, and so this is their own climate now, you know. How nonsensical in old Nannie, to suppose that turkeys born in Scotland cannot bear the cold!"

"Well Flora, perhaps," said little Evelyn hesitating, "but I think we ought to ask papa first, before we decide, for I don't think that old Nannie would take so much trouble, unless she were obliged to, and I am sure that I read all about it in *The Natural History of Domestic Fowls.*"

"*The Natural History of Domestic Fowls,*" exclaimed Flora, "Oh! what a nice book that must be, how much it would tell me that I should like to know, for though knowing about birds and flowers and all that is very nice, and I like to be able to tell their names, and all about them; yet it is not the sort of thing one would take the trouble of *learning*, you know, Evelyn. One would not think of wasting their time on anything so trifling and commonplace as that, in the way of study."

"No, perhaps, not clever people," answered little Evelyn, hesitating, "of course, dear Flora, you, who have so many other things, so much music, and drawing, and French to do, could not

expect to find time for these things, but indeed, indeed I like them so very much, and take so much interest in learning about all these things that one plays with out of doors, that I do not think my time wasted upon them at all."

"Well, for a girl who lives in the country like you, Evelyn, it is all very well," answered Flora; "but I should like to hear what Mrs. S. would say, if she heard of my spending my time in learning about fowls and vegetables."

"Of course, dear Flora, you are too clever to care about these things," returned little Evelyn very simply, "but you know it is quite different with me." And Miss Flora's good humour was quite established by the arrangement thus entered into between them, that henceforth the mechanism of nature was to be considered a study quite unworthy the time and attention of clever people, and only fit for little country girls.

By-and-by the heat became so oppressive, that the two little wanderers were forced to take shelter from its influence within doors. And eager to gratify her cousin, in the way which was still practicable, Evelyn requested her papa to be so very good, if he had nothing else to do, after the letter which he was writing should be finished, as to show Flora and her some of the prints in *The Natural History of Domestic Fowls*,

adding, that it was Flora's opinion that the world laboured under a great mistake in wrapping turkey pullets in pieces of blanket, and in feeding them with hot peppercorns, since they must by this time be quite accustomed to the climate of Britain, and therefore, as well able to bear the cold as hens or ducklings.

Mr. Mackenzie looked up with a smile as he sealed his letter, and said, "A very wise and expedient conclusion, my dear Flora; it is certainly a very hard case that turkeys cannot accustom themselves to the climate in which they are born and bred. They are not half such philosophical animals as the eels, which the old woman assured your aunt, did not think anything of being skinned, they were so used to it."

"Oh! uncle, you always laugh at me," answered Flora, when her own laugh was over, "I can never quite tell whether you are in jest or earnest. I know very well that eels can never become accustomed to skinning, but I do think it quite a different thing with turkeys.

"Certainly, altogether different," answered her uncle; "I do not think it at all desirable that turkeys should become accustomed to skinning, and I suppose it is a similar opinion, which makes old Nannie wrap them in blankets till their feathers grow, lest the cold air should be

trying experiments of that kind; but here is the volume which treats of turkeys, see whether we can find any with blankets. I have great hopes myself that we may find stranger things in this book. I should not be surprised to discover one or two walking about in pattens, or at the least in cloaks and umbrellas."

Flora laughed and pouted at the quizzing tone of her uncle's remarks; but he opened the book at a beautiful picture of a bird about as large as a turkey, only with a long graceful tail, turned up and overshadowing its whole body, not unlike a parasol or a large fan.

"There," said Mr. Mackenzie, "did I not tell you what sensible birds might be found in this book; here is one with a beautiful umbrella to shade it from the sun, and look, it has its hair dressed precisely as you told me you were proposing to dress yours, high on the crown of its head."

"Oh! uncle," remonstrated Flora, "those are little feathers standing up from the crown of its head."

"Well, a plume of feathers, what can be more fashionable?"

"Oh! I know that bird," said Flora, "I saw it at old Lord Erlston's when I was staying at his house in the country, I don't recollect what it

was called, but I am sure this must be the same, for it had a tail just like that which you call a parasol, and sometimes it allowed it to fall down, and then it swept along so gracefully, quite like a lady's train, and I remember it always used to perch upon an old marble dial that stood on a pillar on one of the terraces, and it had a shrill melancholy sort of cry, which I used to like very much, although every body said it was discordant. What can be its name? Evie, do you remember?"

"Oh! a peacock," answered Evelyn in a moment, and she described it so prettily, and so distinctly, that Flora was delighted to recognise all the peculiarities of her old favourite.

The next picture, Flora found it equally difficult, nay, more difficult still, to recognise; she exclaimed, immediately, that it was a large duck, but then corrected herself, by saying, that she remembered a duck had *no legs*.

"No legs!" repeated Mr. Mackenzie, "I suppose then it moves about on wheels, does it—or how?"

"Oh, I know very well," said Flora, looking very wise, "I have often seen a duck in St. James's Park, and they have nothing but those odd yellow fins, which they move up and down in the water."

Mr. Mackenzie burst into a loud laugh, and laughed so long and so heartily, that Flora coloured a good deal, and began to feel considerably affronted.

"Oh, I don't care, although you laugh at me for that uncle," said she at last; "I know these are things which every body may learn, which every body must know sooner or later, and it does not take the least trouble to acquire them; if I had not always been busily engaged learning things of far more consequence, I might have known all about ducks and turkeys, but I am not in the least ashamed of not knowing such common things."

"My dear child, I beg your pardon for laughing at your poor ducks without feet," said her uncle, "I really must be excused, as it is the first time I have ever been introduced to their acquaintance, and I am quite willing to admit that you have been busily occupied all your life learning about much less common-place things than ducks and turkeys. It is true these are birds of every-day occurrence, both in our poultry-yards and in the water in St. James's Park; but still, my dear Flora, it may be useful in future, to prevent the rudeness of such a laugh occurring again, and from some one by whom you would dislike still more than by me to be laughed

at, it might be desirable to count the legs of domestic fowls a little more correctly, and not rob the poor ducks of theirs again, and leave them nothing but a poor pair of fins instead. Fins are capital things in the water, but I do not know how they would agree with feathers at all. It is scarcely worth a young lady's while, to be sure, to know the difference between a foot and a fin; but still, I believe, although it is a fine thing to know the meaning of the word duck in French, and Italian, and German, and Spanish, it may be of use to know the meaning of it in English too, especially as you are likely to hear it oftener in that language."

"When you are a little longer at Glenlee, my Flora," said her aunt, as she stooped to kiss Flora's crimson cheek, "and have begun to learn all our secrets, you will find, that there is one of the cardinal virtues called Justice, which will soon set all these matters to rights. We shall soon learn to estimate *justly* all the different acquirements which are necessary to us; for instance, you will discover, that you set too high a value on those branches of study, which secure you admiration and praise, and too little on such as are merely useful to yourself in the common concerns of life."

"I am sure I set no value on anything I

know," said Flora in a proud tone; "I never boast of my studies."

"No," returned her aunt gently, "but you dearly liked the praise which good Mrs. Buchanan bestowed upon your music, did you not? and though you were so impatient and so unwilling to come and see her, you had no objection to remain, as long as she chose to listen to your playing, and to praise your proficiency. Now, if my Flora knew the strict use of Justice, she would find, that by putting both these feelings in the same balance, and true politeness or kindness of heart in the opposite one, they would soon be found very light and insufficient indeed; and if you will take the great telescope of Justice, and examine through it the motive which induces you to undervalue the useful and interesting details of natural history, and call them trifling and common-place, you will find, I dare say, a little tiny tongue of vanity, which whispers at the bottom of your heart:—'It is impossible that a young lady so accomplished as I am, should be deficient in anything really great or useful, so I will just show that it is my own choice to remain ignorant of this, because I do not think it worth the trouble of acquiring.'

"Come now, Flora, you are too wise, and brave a girl to care about having little faults like this

picked out of your heart and held up to public view: confess that I have seen it all rightly."

And Mrs. Mackenzie looked in Flora's eyes with a smile, so kind, so gay, so unlike a hard taskmistress, who delighted in scolding or mortifying those around her, that Flora threw her arms round her neck and kissed her heartily.

"I believe you have seen everything right, dear aunt; but I am sure, that if you had not found it out for me, I should never have found it out for myself; but to show you that I am determined not to *continue* ignorant of all these useful things, I will begin my study of them directly, and Evie shall give me my first lesson, and we shall not allow that naughty uncle to have anything to do with us till we can defy him to laugh at our ignorance."

"Oh, mamma," exclaimed Evelyn, in a tone of delight, "cousin Flora has all the cardinal virtues besides; is not that Temperance, and Fortitude, and Prudence, mamma? Flora has nothing but Justice to learn."

CHAPTER V.

SHOWING THAT WHEN A YOUNG GENTLEMAN HAS NO DESIRE TO LOOK LIKE ONE, HE HAS NO RIGHT TO BE OFFENDED IF HE IS TAKEN FOR A VAGRANT.

A WEEK'S holiday is a very long time, especially when it occurs towards the end of May, or the beginning of June, when every day is fine, and not one plan delayed or frustrated on account of the weather. Six days of continued amusement is a great deal, and I am sure that none of my young readers will deny that six days devoted to fishing, and boating, and walking, and riding alternately, is a very considerable routine of happiness. There was not one boy or girl of the little party at Glenlee, that did not feel when their week's holiday came to an end, that it had contained a very large proportion of the enjoyment of their lives. And yet, when the morning came, which recalled them to their serious occupations once more, it was in a gay humour, and with a feeling of perfect contentment and satisfaction, that they bade it welcome. The little girls were to go on under the superintendence of Mrs. Mackenzie herself; but the boys had a mile's walk every morning to the house of the parish clergyman,

with whom they were to study for a few hours daily, and then return to prepare their lessons at home.

One morning, a day or two after the lessons had been regularly re-established, Roderick, and Kenneth, and little Hector set forth on their walk to Mr. Stewart's house as usual, the little girls accompanying them as far as the wicket at the end of the lawn, and then returning to their own duties beside their mamma and aunt. It was a beautiful morning, still bright, and warm, and sunny, as it had been throughout the preceding week; and the tempting freshness of the air acted with an evil influence on the mind of little Hector; a personage at all times too ready to allow the call of pleasure to set at nought the weightier considerations of business and of duty. He suddenly addressed his companions, as if a bright discovery had just flashed upon him.

"I should like to know what's the use of my going into Mr. Stewart at the same time as you, when I have to sit a whole hour, while you read over your Greek; doing nothing but looking at the lesson I learnt perfectly last night. I'm determined I won't go in for half an hour at least; I shall see by the church clock when it is half-past eleven, and I am far better out here in the open air till ten."

"You will do no such thing, master Hector, at all events till you have asked Mr. Stewart's leave," returned Roderick; "when we reach the manse, he may, perhaps, allow you to romp in his garden for half an hour; that is far the safest place for you, my good friend."

"Pooh! Roderick, don't be such a bully," persisted the young rebel. "See, it wants five minutes from eleven on the church clock, and I know very well that I shall have nothing to do before twelve. I *will* go. I have got Evie's copy of *Jack and the Bean-stalk* in my pocket, and I will just climb to the top of that green knowe, and sit there in the shade of the trees to read it."

"Excellent!" exclaimed Kenneth, laughing heartily at the droll idea of Hector the restless climbing a green knowe for any purpose so erudite as the one adduced.

"Excellent, Hector, my friend; and when you have finished your studies, run down to Donald Roy's farm in the haugh; it is not many miles away, and he has the best *braird* of beans in the strath. You may there pull a half-grown stalk for yourself, and then it will not take you very long just to trot to the top of Ben Aigh and plant it; only consider how grand it will be to have a bean-stalk on the top of Ben Aigh! Why, Jack would have reached the giant's castle at least a day

sooner, if he had planted his bean on a mountain top, instead of in his mother's garden."

"Well, well, Mr. Kenneth, you may laugh if you like," answered Hector drily; "but I shall get to the top of the knowe in the first place, and finish my book. I am not such a fool as to travel away to the haugh, in the hope that Donald Roy's beans are as much worth planting, as those Jack got from the fairy; and I don't want any beans for myself, I only want to sit in the cool air on that knowe all by myself, instead of being bored by hearing you gabble your Greek, while I am cooped up doing nothing."

This reasoning sounded so very respectable, that Roderick began to waver in his determination of opposing master Hector's sunshiny plan.

"Well, Hector, I suppose you are old enough to judge for yourself," said he, in reply; "you know as well as I do, that if you are too late for your lessons, you will be punished; and if you have not steadiness enough to keep your proper time, you may depend upon it, that I will make no attempt to screen you. I assure you, that, instead of doing so, I will only make your fault the greater by confessing how I have cautioned you."

Hector declared himself perfectly competent to fulfil the trust reposed in him, and the green gate of the manse garden just then appearing in view,

he diverged from his companions, and began to make his way up the knowe, while the other boys betook themselves to the prosecution of their Greek studies within doors.

The green knowe was equally tempting, upon a closer inspection, to what it appeared to Hector from the road; and he selected a soft, mossy nook beneath the shade of a pine-tree, and commenced the study of Jack's adventures with a hearty appetite for his task. He accompanied the luckiest wight ever patronised by the fairies through every stage of his adventures. He climbed the bean to the giant's castle, and accompanied him through the various stratagems pursued by the giant's wife, till at last, the redoubtable bean was fairly cut through with Jack's clasp knife, and the giant's castle came tumbling down, till it was comfortably established in his mother's garden; and then having seen Jack in quiet and safe possession of his rich domain, Hector shut the book, and turned to look at the clock in the church; however, it was but twenty minutes after eleven. An hour all but twenty minutes still remained to him of idleness, and Hector was by no means the sort of personage to let it go unimproved.

He wandered hither and thither, over the rocky hill, where he had been seated, and upon which the morning sun was lying bright and warm,

except where chequered by the shadow of the pine-trees. He first cut himself a long cane from a silver saugh, and occupied a few moments in pruning and training and putting it into proper shape. Then he espied some very beautiful snow-white funguses, which he thought he might as well carry home to the girls, and which he, therefore, climbed a scaur, or sloping bank of red earth, to obtain; much to the detriment of his pretty suit of tartans, which, though scarcely more than three weeks old, had not rewarded Margery's toils, to counteract the slovenly habits of their wearer, by retaining any trace of their original smartness. The funguses were very pretty and curious, but they were found too troublesome to carry, for Hector's patience to retain them long, and they were very soon pitched over the crag. They startled a flock of sheep, which were very quietly and sedately browzing at the bottom of the knowe; and Hector found such a fruitful source of amusement in their timidity, that he continued to drive them before him all over the hill by a similar process of pelting. By-and-by, in this heedless race, he found himself on the edge of the high road, at a very considerable distance from Mr. Stewart's house, and quite out of sight of his beacon, the church clock; but fully convinced that his hour all but twenty minutes could not have

been expended in such trifling as had engaged him, he commenced his return to the manse in a very easy and deliberate saunter.

He had not walked many paces, when he was overtaken by an old gentleman, on a very pretty brisk-looking Shetland pony, who stopped at the gate of a farm-house upon the road, and looked very hard at our friend Hector, as he dismounted from his fiery little steed, and seemed about to enter the gate. Now, our friend Hector, as I have before hinted, was not at any time distinguished as a favourite of the Graces, and on this particular day, with his clothes stained with red earth from his hunt after the funguses, and his dress otherwise disordered from the romping nature of his pursuits throughout the morning, any one might be excusable in mistaking him for something very far removed from the son of a Scotch baronet; and so it proved, for after another hard look at the little pedestrian, the old gentleman addressed him very kindly—

"Will you hold this pony for me, my little man, for two or three minutes, till I go in and speak to the farmer, and I'll give you a penny, when I return?"

The offer of the penny sounded rather humiliating, but Hector eyed the pony with a wishful gaze. At home he was never allowed to ride

except under the special charge of the groom; and to have the entire command of a pony, even for so small a space of time as the old man specified, was too great a temptation to be resisted. Accordingly, Hector made a very awkward bow, and laid his hand upon the reins, while the old gentleman, with many injunctions to be steady and take care of the little horse, lifted the latch, and disappeared. Now the idea of standing quietly with the bridle in his hand, while the pony's real owner was absent, did not at all enter Mr. Hector's calculations. He concluded he should have time for a brisk trot up and down the road, within a reasonable distance of the gate, and yet perfectly fulfil the terms of his agreement. Accordingly, he scrambled with some difficulty into the saddle as soon as he found himself alone, and giving a triumphant shake to the reins, and a courageous jog with his heels in lieu of spurs, off he set, with a speed that need not have disgraced John Gilpin, a famous horseman, of whom my readers have, I dare say, often read; and if they have not, I recommend them to apply to mamma or papa for an introduction to him immediately.

Well, Hector rode along for a good way, till a turn of the road occurred which would have taken him out of sight of the farm-house gate, and then he thought he had better turn round and ride back

again, in case the old gentleman might come out, mean time and be fretting over the disappearance of his pony. But the fiery little steed seemed to have become perfectly aware that he had a much better title to manage his rider than his rider to manage him, and so when Hector tugged the rein to this side and to that, in hopes of turning his stout little head the other way, he only threw up his ears and snorted, and did not pay his commander the compliment even of slackening his pace. In vain did our little Gilpin strain his arms in pulling at the bridle; the little beast took the bit between his teeth, and cantered on very much at his ease, and very regardless of all the efforts made to detain him.

It was now that the vision of the church clock flashed upon poor Hector like some terrible apparition. He became suddenly convinced that it must be long after twelve o'clock. He was certain that even now he had overstayed his time, had broken his promise to Roderick, and proved himself quite unfit to be trusted, besides incurring the punishment which he felt very sure would attend upon his truancy. And yet here was he speeding on at the rate of ten miles an hour, in an exactly contrary direction to that which he ought to have been pursuing, without the most remote probability of reaching home till the hours of study

should be over, if indeed he should ever be at home again. For, as Hector was borne along upon his untiring steed, and the trees and the houses flitted by him so rapidly, that he was obliged to turn his head aside, and hold by the pommel to prevent himself from turning giddy and blind, visions came across his brain of a terrible tale which he had once heard Roderick read aloud to his father of a wild horse, upon which a poor man had once been bound by thongs of leather, by way of a punishment, and which had borne him over trackless deserts, beyond the reach of human ken, and there, after undergoing unlimited toil and torture, the poor man was found by savages, released from his terrible steed, nobody knows how, but still faint and bleeding from his race. And so Hector fixed his mind upon this story, and he puzzled over the man's name, till he remembered that it was Mazeppa, and he went on thinking and thinking of it, till he had quite persuaded himself that the old gentleman's pony was to carry him into the heart of a wilderness, and then that he should be found, like Mazeppa, more dead than alive, and perhaps never be heard of by any of his friends again. And in the midst of his woes, Hector derived infinite consolation from the conviction that when he *was* found in a desert, exhausted by the fury of his wild steed, no one

at least would remember to punish him for playing truant from his lessons.

To this consolatory point he had arrived, when, after riding about three miles and a half, at a brisk canter, a sudden turn in the road brought him within view of the house of Donald Roy, a farmer in the haugh, and a great friend and ally of all the boys, inasmuch as he dressed hooks for their fishing, and pointed out the nicest pools for them as they passed, and sent to give them notice whenever a fox or an otter was about to be hunted in the strath. The sight of Donald's house was a marvellously pleasant interruption to Hector's romantic speculations on the colour of his approaching destiny. He immediately began to calculate that if he could by any means attract the attention of Donald, or any of his men, they might probably be able to stop the wild horse, and he should escape the wilderness, and the fate of Mazeppa after all. Accordingly, he had just gathered his breath for a tremendous shout, when, to his unutterable relief and joy, the vision of Donald's Highland bonnet appearing over the dike, at a little distance, saved him from all further appre-

sion.

Gude guide us, Mr. Hector," said the honest
lander, as he stepped over the wall, and
l by the road-side, awaiting the approach of

the young equestrian, "Whare is't you're galloping to that gate. I'm misdoubting but the law is in the wrang side o' the hoose wi' ye the day, sir," and he stopped the headlong career of the wild horse with one motion of his vigorous wrist. "Ye-es," answered the poor cavalier, while his teeth still chattered with the shaking he had received; "a gentleman gave me his pony to hold, and so I mounted it, and it ran away with me, that's all, and I am very much obliged to you, Donald, for stopping it, for I was afraid——"

"A gentleman gae ye his powny to haud! What'na gentleman, Mr. Hector, my bonny man, you maun surely ken wha the man was that aught it, or else I'm reddin' ye'se get the credit o' runnin' awa' wi' *it*," rejoined Donald, with great sagacity.

"I don't care what he thinks—he had no business to mistake me for a stable-boy," said Hector, proudly, as he dismounted; "and unless you can be so good as to get some one to take it back for me, I'm sure he may just come for it himself, for *I* am not going to ride it back again."

"Ou, I'se warrant we'll be able to get a bit gillie 'ill be fain enough to ride it back," answered Donald, with a smile; "that's to say when you've once tell't me whare it cam frae."

Whereupon Hector commenced a full and par-

ticular account of his proceedings from the time he left the boys at the foot of the brae, till the moment when the view of Donald's bonnet at a distance afforded him such sensible relief, omitting only his own cogitations upon the fate of Mazeppa, because he feared that either Donald might never have heard of his hero, or that he might laugh at his apprehensions.

In return for this confidence, Donald took our little hero into the farm-house, and gave him a frothing bowl of new milk and a bannock, with fresh water to wash his hands and face, and he brushed the dry earth from his clothes with his own hands, and made him altogether as neat and as comfortable as circumstances would permit. Moreover, he gave him a great deal of good advice, showed him the hour upon his own watch, that it was already half-past two, and recommended him to set off immediately on his walk home, to go straight to his uncle, and lay before him a true statement of the circumstances which had occurred to prevent his attendance upon Mr. Stewart, lest he should be suspected of an act of wilful and premeditated truancy—a crime, as Donald assured him, of infinitely greater magnitude than the breach of decorum and prudence of which he had been in reality guilty.

The pony had meanwhile been despatched

under a safe escort to the farm-house, where its owner had gone to call, and Hector, with a mind and body considerably relieved of their torments, albeit the sting of conscience was still perceptible, took his solitary way in a direction which pointed straight to Glenlee.

He thought it only a waste of trouble to endeavour to join the boys, since it was a question difficult to answer, whether they or he would be the first to reach home.

I have no doubt that many of the little folks who may read this page, can turn their minds' eye backwards on some walk, or some hour of waiting or of solitude, in which their minds have been fully absorbed by the contemplation of an ordeal very similar to that which awaited Hector. If they can, I would have them confess before proceeding farther, whether the unhappiness of that hour were not in itself punishment sufficient for the error or the imprudence which they may have committed. Hector, at least, found it so, and his cogitations, gloomy as they were in themselves, were by no means pleasantly interrupted by the approach of Roderick and Kenneth, just as he came within sight of the gate.

"Well, Hector, my fine fellow," said Kenneth, in his bold, merry humour, "where is the golden hen, and the ruby eggs, and all the fine things?

I suppose you planted the bean, and waited till it grew strong enough, and then climbed all the way to the giant's castle since we saw you. I am glad you have come back without any damage, though you do look somewhat crestfallen for a victorious hero, I must admit."

Hector took no notice of Kenneth's *badinage*, but Roderick's address was not so easily parried.

"I am very sorry to see, Hector, that my fears about you were only too well grounded this morning," said he, in a grave tone; "you can tell best whether you left us with the intention of playing the truant from school altogether. I told you that I should say nothing to hide your fault, and you may be quite sure I will not."

"You may be quite sure you will never be asked," was the sturdy rejoinder; "I know very well that I was very foolish not to go with you at once, but I know still better, that when I left you I intended to be back by twelve o'clock." It was a sort of relief to Hector's mind that he had been suspected of worse than he had been in reality guilty of. It seemed a sort of proof that he had not done quite so wrong as he might have done, and he strode onwards to the wicket on the lawn with redoubled vigour from the idea.

His uncle and aunt were walking about among the flowers, and Flora and Evelyn were beside

them, and they were all dressed for dinner, and every body looked so neat, and so nice, and so happy, that poor Hector in his dirty tartans, soiled with the dust of his long hot walk, and his poor face so scorched and heated, felt tenfold more a culprit than ever. He was quite determined, however, not to flinch from his duty this time; so he walked boldly up to his uncle and aunt, and tried not to look with envy on the other boys, as they rang the bell merrily and hurried up stairs, that they also might make their toilet.

"Why, Hector, man," said his uncle, as soon as he had approached near enough to hear, "you have surely made very hard work of your walk to-day, that you look so hot and tired, and what brings you here instead of running up stairs with the others to dress? have you forgotten that this is a half holiday, and that you are all to dine with us to-day? come, be off, man, or you will not have half time enough to smarten up that rueful plight before the bell rings."

"But, uncle," began Hector, twisting himself about with the awkwardness which his conscious guilt and his conscious slovenliness engendered, "I am come to tell you, that I have never been at school to-day at all."

His uncle was very grave for a moment, and

then replied, "Well, Hector, I hope you have also come to tell me a good reason why you have not been at school to-day!"

"No, uncle, I am afraid you will think it a very bad reason," answered the little culprit, "I know it was *all along* of my own folly, in thinking I could ride a pony and it ran away with me."

"I am quite prepared to believe that it was *all along* of your own folly, Master Hector, though I certainly cannot compliment your English much; but what occasion had you to mount a pony at all on your way to school, I should like to know?"

"I did not mean to, uncle, I assure you," pursued Hector, gathering eagerness in his defence; "but after *Jack and the Bean-stalk* was finished, and I had done chasing those sheep all about the hill, and when I came down to the road, and that old gentleman asked me—"

"Well, well, I have no time to hear about bean-stalks, and sheep, and old gentlemen, just now," said Mr. Mackenzie, trying to conceal a very broad smile; "I shall be satisfied at once, for the present, if you assure me that you had no desire or intention to evade the lessons this morning."

"I can assure you, uncle, I had no desire nor intention whatever," said Hector, eagerly, "and I was very sorry indeed to evade them,

and it was not my fault at all, only that I was very foolish."

"That I do not doubt," said Mr. Mackenzie; "but as I have always found you speak the truth, Hector, I am willing to take your word for the present; so now run off and dress as fast as you can, or you will not be in time for dinner."

Hector could not help thinking his uncle very kind indeed, in thus taking his innocence upon trust, and he felt a sweet glow of honest pride in the recollection of these words, "I have always heard you speak the truth." He drew himself up proudly and happily at the thought that this praise was no more than he deserved; a very clear and musical voice within whispered to Hector that he always did speak the truth, and that nothing was ever formidable enough in his eyes to drive him for refuge to a falsehood.

He went up stairs and performed his toilet with a sense of happy independence, which was very exhilarating, and which effectually silenced all the animadversions of the boys, and when he came down stairs again, with his hair glittering, and his face shining with the marks of Margery's skill and care, you would never have guessed that, but a few hours before, he had nearly made up his mind to meet the fate of Mazeppa. When

Hector entered the drawing-room every one was there before him, and, besides the usual party, there was an old gentleman with silver hair, and a very good-natured expression of face, who was busily engaged talking to the little girls.

"Come away, little master Gilpin," said Mr. Mackenzie, as soon as he observed Hector; "here, my dear sir, is the hero of the morning. Hector make your bow to Mr. Drummond;" and as Hector made his bow in the most respectful way possible, there was a great deal of laughing went on between his uncle and the stranger, which made poor Hector blush a good deal, from the sort of consciousness, that his foolish adventures had been made the subject of conversation. By-and-by every one was seated at table, and Hector had time to recover his self-possession, and to remark that the two girls seemed quite engrossed by Mr. Drummond, and that even little Evelyn seemed to take leave of her shyness in talking to him, while he in his turn appeared never to weary of chattering with Flora, and telling funny stories to amuse Evelyn, while he now and then addressed a sensible remark to Roderick, or exchanged a joke with Kenneth. He seemed a universal favourite, and Hector, in common with all the rest, soon found himself absorbed in listening to him; as soon, however,

as the cloth was withdrawn, Mr. Mackenzie turned round to Hector, and called upon him for a detail of his day's proceedings.

"I hope you are ready to prove my confidence well founded, by satisfying me on every point which remains doubtful," said he, in a grave tone; "and now begin from the time your study of *Jack* was finished; the boys have already told me of your proposal to remain an hour behind them, and regarding it, I can only express my extreme disapproval of any proposal on your part to amend or interfere with Mr. Stewart's plans, and I desire, that, in future, you conform to them in the strictest manner, and in every particular, except when you can obtain his sanction to an opposite course. And now," continued he, "about the gentleman's pony, how, in the first place, did you come to have this pony at your command at all?"

"Why, uncle, you know," Hector began, in a very business-like tone of voice, "as I was coming along the road, a gentleman rode up on a pony, an old fellow he was, you know, uncle, and I suppose he could not see very well, or else he was a person who expected to be waited upon by everybody, for he called me, without any ceremony, to take care of his pony for him while he went into the farm-house, and of course I did it

because I did not like to refuse; and then you know, uncle, I mounted, intending to ride him up and down, as I have always seen other people do who are left to take charge of horses, and so—and so—perhaps the pony had taken fright, or, perhaps, it wanted to get home again, for it set off at full speed, and I could not stop it, and so it galloped so far away that I could not get back in time for school hours."

"Well, but, Hector, what could make an old fellow, who could not see very well, keep so spirited a horse as that," said his uncle, gravely; "are you sure he was a little blind, and what makes you think so?"

"Why, uncle, because he offered me a penny for holding his horse," answered Hector, proudly, "so that showed that he could not see I was a gentleman."

"Well, but you were well enough pleased to earn the penny though you were a gentleman, or you would not have agreed to take care of the horse," said his uncle, with steady gravity.

"No, indeed, sir, I wished to have a ride, and that was the reason I agreed so quickly."

"So, so, then you had made up your mind to have a ride all the way to the Haugh beforehand."

"No, uncle," answered poor Mazeppa, shaking

his head, "I did not indeed; I only meant to ride quietly up and down till the old gentleman came out again, and then I should have returned him his horse, only without accepting the penny; but the pony was too strong and spirited for me, and so it went off of its own accord, and never stopped at all till Donald Roy stopped it himself at the Haugh."

"And had you no anxiety all this time, Hector, to know what the old gentleman thought of the disappearance of his pony."

"No, uncle, not at all," replied Hector, in a tone of great animosity; "that old gentleman was the origin of all my misfortunes."

"Do you think so?" answered Mr. Mackenzie. "Let us see whether we cannot analyze that matter a little. In the first place, do you think, if you had been snugly seated in Mr. Stewart's study that you would have seen that old gentleman at all?" Hector hung his head. "And in the second place, if you had done merely what the old gentleman asked you to do, and held his pony till his return, do you think it could have ran off with you at all?"

"No, uncle; but then if I had stood like a groom-boy holding the horse by the bridle, I should have been too late for my lessons all the same."

"Well, it appears that if the old gentleman *asked* you to hold his horse, you could not in any case avoid being late? Can you tell me the reason why he asked you?" pursued Mr. Mackenzie.

Hector blushed deeper than ever. "Yes, uncle, I know the reason why," said he in a low voice.

"Then, try whether you cannot tell me now what the real source of your misfortunes has been to-day," asked his uncle, with a smile.

"Well, I think, uncle, that if I had not been in an idle humour this morning, I should not have wished to stay an hour away from school, and then, I think if I had not *looked* like a groom-boy, I should not have been mistaken for one, and so it has been all my own fault after all."

"Bravissimo, my honourable logician," exclaimed Mr. Drummond, who had been listening very attentively all the while, and who now bent forward and placed a tempting slice of melon on Hector's plate, "and now see whether an old fellow that cannot see very well is fit to choose a good melon. I am very sure you will feel no disposition to serve that as you wished to serve my pony this morning." Hector started and stared at his interrogator, till he blushed to the very roots of his hair, and everybody round the table laughed at his discomfiture. "Never mind,

my boy," said Mr. Drummond, "you have come off with flying colours, by bearing in mind that honesty is the best policy, and for that reason telling your tale without embellishment. If you had taken a contrary course you must have been found out, as your uncle and I met but a few moments after you had left me, and I got into his gig and drove with him in search of my pony straight to the Haugh, where we had the complete history of your visit from Donald. Shake hands with me, master Hector; bad as it is for a young gentleman, of the appearance which I *now* see you are capable of presenting, to be mistaken for a stable-boy, it is much worse to be mistaken either for a rogue or a scapegrace, and after to-day's acquaintance, I at least will never mistake you for either. But take this little bit of advice along with my praise, never be induced to neglect *appearances;* a gentleman who runs the risk of passing for a vagrant, by a want of proper attention to matters which every gentleman ought to consider indispensable, must not expect always to escape the mortification which he takes so little pains to prevent.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SOURCE OF HARMONY.

"Roderick, I want you to mix me some of that beautiful green which you used for the meadows in your sketch of Glenlee, and you must make haste, for I want it this very moment. I am in the middle of the sacred grove in my Guarini Illustrato, and I am very anxious to have it finished to-day." So spake Flora, one very rainy Saturday morning, when the bad weather had sent all the children to spend their holiday in their own way within doors.

She spoke, as her words imply, in a tone of great haste and impatience, and Roderick, who was plunged in the intricacies of a mathematical problem, with a great volume of Euclid open before him, and his instruments scattered over the table, as if he were quite buried in his occupation, looked up to her, and knit his brows as though he were trying to understand what she had said to him.

"I beg pardon, Flora, I was thinking of something else; what was it you said?"

"Pshaw, Roderick, how stupid you are! I want some of that beautiful green colour, and I cannot mix it for myself, and I want you to do it for me,

that is what I said, and I want it immediately for the last touches of the sacred grove, because nothing else will do."

"Oh! Flora, you always choose such a mal-a-propos time to plague one," answered the student, with a very natural and excusable look of annoyance, as his train of ideas was broken by this hasty and somewhat imperious address. "Where are your colours?—give me them quick, and your palette." Flora presented two cakes, one of yellow and the other of blue, and Roderick was preparing very good-naturedly to mix them for her, when he discovered that one of the cakes was wrong.

"This won't do, Flora; this is nothing but indigo-blue, and the green you want cannot be produced with anything but cobalt."

He looked once more towards his great book, and was just about to resume his studies:

"Well, Roderick, I must confess you are the most disobliging creature I ever saw," said Flora, in a tone of great indignation; "is it possible that, for the mere unwillingness to walk up stairs and get me some cobalt blue out of your own drawing-box, you will allow my picture to be stopped in the middle?"

"Oh! dear, Flora, surely since all the others have been done with your own green, this need not be made different from them. It will cost me

a whole hour's labour if I am obliged to leave this and walk up stairs just now. Do take your own green for to-day, or else leave the sacred grove till the evening, and then I will do whatever you please." And Roderick returned to his problem in Euclid with all the self-wrapt philosophy for which mathematicians of all ages have ever been remarkable.

"The evening!" repeated Flora, as she turned upon her heel, and tossed her head angrily; "I am not accustomed to lay the finishing-touches on my pictures by candle-light. But this is always the way I am treated by Roderick. It was only yesterday he refused in the dryest manner to ride the grey horse, and allow me to have the pony; and indeed if the day had been fine enough to admit of my riding at all, I must either have ridden the grey horse myself, or stayed at home, if it had not been for little Evelyn persuading him—he does anything for Evelyn."

"Come and let us settle this affair of the green for you in the mean time," said Mrs. Mackenzie, laying down her work, and stretching out her hand for the colours. She made it a rule to silence all recriminations among her little flock as quickly as possible, and accordingly lost no time in leading back Flora's thoughts to their starting-point. "Won't this colour do for the purpose you want?"

"No, aunt," replied the little artist, "at least I should like very much to give a brighter tint, something more ethereal-looking, you know, to the sacred grove, than merely the common green of the pastoral glades and meadows, and I have succeeded so very well with all the others, dear aunt, that I am particularly anxious about this."

The great work on hand was neither more nor less than the carrying out of Flora's fanciful connexion between the lawn at Glenlee and the scenery in the Pastor Fido. She had embodied her own ideas by illustrating the whole poem by sketches made after her own taste from the immediate vicinity of the house.

"Well," answered Mrs. Mackenzie, with a smile, and drawing her own large colour-box towards her as she spoke, "your desire of conferring distinction upon the sacred grove is too laudable not to meet with due encouragement. I think I can accommodate you with a little cobalt-blue, and I advise you to sit down and mix it for yourself; a few experiments will very soon give you the proper tint, and you can judge by your own eye when it becomes *ethereal* enough to suit the refinement of your ideas."

"Oh! thank you, dearest aunt," exclaimed Flora, in a tone of delight; "I will go and bring my portfolio, and draw beside you, if you will

allow me, on purpose that you may judge of the effect;" and in a few moments Flora and her goods and chattels were arranged at Mrs. Mackenzie's work-table, and the young artist wholly engrossed in the compound of cobalt-blue and burnt sienna.

In a few minutes Kenneth entered the room, and lounged idly over to the table, where Flora was seated.

"I am going to look over the Illustrations, Flora, may I?" asked he. "My hands are quite clean, and you have got them all, I see, in your portfolio."

"No, no, Kenneth, I will show you them all when they are finished, and I am so afraid of having them soiled or rumpled before they are quite done, that I have made up my mind not to take them out again at all till they are complete."

"Come, Flo', don't be so cross-grained now; you are not going to treat me as if I were little Hector, or anybody who did not know the respect due to a pretty drawing. Turn them out for me; there is a dear; I am really very anxious to see that little priestess since she was finished; I dare say her white drapery is not half so like Musidora's wet bathing-gown, now that you have touched it up; and you know I have not seen it at all since you improved upon my hints."

"Pshaw, Kenneth, how can you be so foolish!" said Flora, pettishly. "Your hints, forsooth! as if a school-boy like you could know anything of Guarini, or the drapery of a priestess. You may as well go away at once, for I have no intention whatever of turning out my drawings for your inspection."

"As you please, Mistress Flora," said Kenneth, in a proud tone, "I dare say the loss is as much yours as mine; for, in spite of your contempt of the *school-boy*, I have no doubt that I know more about classical costume than you do; but of course you are the mistress of your own drawings:" and he got up, and whistled a tune, and sat down by the window to watch the clouds. He had sat but a very little while, when little Evelyn entered softly, and walked up to that end of the room, where Roderick was sitting.

"Roderick, would you be so very good as to mend this pen for me? it is for something very particular, and —— Oh! but I am afraid Roderick is very busy; I had better not ask him just now," and Evelyn turned round to her mamma, with a look of perplexity.

"Come here, Evie, and I'll mend it for you," said Kenneth; "I have nothing else to do; I will mend as many as you please."

"Thank you, Kenneth, dear," answered Evelyn,

in a hesitating voice, "your pens are always very good ones, but this is for something *so* particular. I want to write the name over the new chaunt I have been copying for Mrs. Buchanan; and as this is the very first I ever did, I am very anxious to have it quite cleanly and nicely written; and so, Kenneth, you see I want a very light fine pen, and your pens are always for good writers, who write with a soft one. Do you think you will make it fine enough?"

"Evelyn, dear, I am quite ready to mend it," said Roderick, springing up from his books, and spinning Evelyn round by the waist, like a tee-totum; "you know I am pen-maker in ordinary to you, and Kenneth is only deputy-clerk of the pen-knife; there, let me see this very particular fine pen;" and he mended it very carefully at the light, and made Evelyn sit down to try it twice over before the writing quite pleased him which she made with it, and then when she had left the room, again he returned to his mathematics, and was soon as busily engaged as ever, while Flora looked up to her aunt, with a glance which said very intelligibly, "see how little he allows his business to come in the way of obliging Evelyn, though it was too pressing to admit of his lending me his assistance."

By-and-by little Evelyn re-entered the room

with her chaunt nicely copied, on a long strip of music-paper, which had been given to her by her papa.

It was very clearly and prettily done, although a first attempt, and her mamma praised it very much for the care and neatness which it exhibited.

"But, my dear child, what is this I see at each corner?" said Mrs. Mackenzie, "here are the marks of two great black thumbs, as if some one had grasped the paper with dirty hands."

"Oh! yes, mamma, those are Hector's thumbs," answered Evelyn, "he asked to see my chaunt, and he had just been doing something with charcoal, but then I did not like to refuse to let him look at it, mamma, because I knew that your India-rubber, if you would be so good as lend it to me, would take it all off again in a minute." Again Flora looked up to her aunt, but this time she blushed a little, and the look was not one of triumph, for it seemed to say, "Little Evelyn is far more good-natured and good-humoured than I am."

Kenneth's observations on the clouds were totally unsatisfactory, though he continued them till the problem was solved and proved, and the Sacred Grove had received the last finishing touches, and the first bell warned him to go and make himself ready for that which was the most

charming dinner in the week, inasmuch as it was the only one he always ate beside his papa and mamma, in company with the whole holiday party of Saturday.

The dinner was as merry as usual to-day, and in nowise tinged with the gloom which overspread the skies, and, after dinner, the quiet employments of the day were crowned by a game of romps with papa, such as left nothing of fun or exercise to desire, even in the most active and merry-hearted among the group. It was observable, however, that amid all this mirth and hilarity, poor Flora did not entirely succeed in shaking herself free from the remembrance of her little pet with the two boys in the morning. She addressed them both with perfect good-humour, when occasion offered, it is true, but there was a little sting of remembrance in her mind which robbed her manner of its accustomed frank sociality, and led her to seek her frolics more in company with her uncle than with the boys.

The noisy gaiety of the evening was interrupted by the entrance of the tea-tray, and by the time the giddy little spirits had tamed themselves down to the order and regularity of the tea-table, and its refreshing stimulus had restored them to the necessary degree of tranquillity, Mrs. Mackenzie proposed that the evening should be devoted to

something more rationally amusing than hot-buttered-beans, or hunt-the-slipper, and at the same time volunteered to provide the entertainment of the evening herself, with a pledge that it would prove satisfactory to all well-disposed and reasonable people.

"Oh! yes, yes," said half a dozen voices at once, "mamma is sure to have something entertaining," or "we will trust implicitly to aunt's selection." And when old Hugh disappeared with the tea-things, Mrs. Mackenzie pushed back the large table, and drew her own little one snugly to the fire-side, stirred the fire, which, on a rainy evening, is sure to be lighted, even in June, in the Highlands, and drew all the little people round in a nice snug circle, with papa at one side, and herself at the other.

"I remember when we were reading *Bracebridge Hall*," said Mrs. Mackenzie, looking round with a smile, "Flora said the most exciting moment possible, was that in which Lady Lillycraft put her hand in her work-bag, and pulled out the little manuscript written on vellum, and tied with blue ribbon, which she was to read aloud to the circle. My manuscript has neither vellum nor blue ribbon to recommend it, but I have no doubt that if papa will take the trouble of reading my story aloud for us, we shall derive both

instruction and amusement from it." And she placed a pretty little satin-paper book sewed with gold thread, and much smarter in appearance than Lady Lillycraft's, in the hands of Mr. Mackenzie, who, after the universal clapping of hands which hailed its appearance had subsided, drew the candles towards him, and read the following little tale.

THE SOURCE OF HARMONY.

One beautiful starlit night, in the month of August, it happened that I was stretched at length under the hazels which overhung the bed of a small stream, among the mountains. My couch was formed of one of those tiny nooks of velvet turf composed of moss and wild flowers, which are usually allotted in the Highlands as ball-rooms and tilting-fields to the fairies. Nothing could be more beautiful than the one which I had chosen, for it was encircled by rocks, and stones, and the graceful tufts of lady-fern waved about it everywhere, and the twining boughs of the ash and the hazel formed the most beautiful canopy imaginable, only admitting glimpses now and then of the myriads of stars, that flashed and twinkled among their leaves. On the one hand, the gully through which the river fell in a broken and precipitous course to the lake below, opened a little view of

the mountains, which rose towering over the whole valley like giants stationed there to guard and protect it.

It happened that I had sought the fragrant seclusion of my fairy couch after the unpleasant occurrence between myself and a dear friend, of a slight difference of opinion, which had been the cause of high words between us, and had sent me forth to smooth down the ruffled plumes of my mind and feelings, in the solitude of the quiet night, in the presence only of the dews and the night-breeze.

My reflections, notwithstanding the calm tranquillity of the scene, turned all upon the discords and confusions to which human nature is so perpetually liable, and I began to ask myself what wayward influence could possibly lead those who love each other warmly and kindly, to inflict wounds, by injudicious treatment, or momentary heat of temper, upon those whose happiness in any of the essentials of life would be preferred before their own a hundred fold.

"It must proceed," said I, half aloud, "from the inevitable disorder and confusion which have overspread the whole animate and inanimate creation since the fall of the first pair. It is one of the tangled threads in that skein which can never be wound up till we are permitted to see into the life of things in another world."

As I pronounced these words with a deep sigh, it chanced that my eye remained fixed upon a little star of unusual brilliance, which glanced and sparkled in upon me, through the boughs, with that singular and mysterious resemblance to a human eye for which those beautiful orbs have often been remarked by the imaginative. I continued to gaze upwards upon the bright inquisitive-looking star, till my whole train of thought became gradually attracted to it, and I left off contemplating the perversity of human nature, and pursued my meditation on the radiant object which engrossed me. Suddenly it shot through the sky and disappeared, and I felt a pang of disappointment, in the conviction that my keen and watchful observer had turned out to be nothing but a summer-meteor.

Presently, however, I was sensible of a peculiar sort of radiance near the ground beside me, and, on turning round, I beheld my lovely star beaming upon the forehead of a creature of most glorious perfection, who stood poised upon one tiny foot, in a bending and graceful attitude, on the arched spray of the little waterfall. I felt suddenly as if there had been music on the air, but I have since imagined that the exquisite regularity and harmony of her form and features deceived me into the belief, and from the intense gratifica-

tion of all the senses of my soul besides, induced me to suppose the sense of hearing included.

The terrible effect which the presence of a supernatural object usually produces upon human nature seemed entirely suspended in my case. I was sensible of nothing beyond an admiration so intense, that I scarcely breathed from apprehension that I might lose a moment's enjoyment of the loveliness of the apparition. She was not of the diminutive stature usually ascribed to fairies or sylphs, yet her proportions were far too delicate and ethereal to have been formed of earthly mould, and her apparel was of so aërial a texture and fashion, that it resembled nothing more than a fabric of woven dew. All that she wore of ornament was the star upon her forehead—a spark of heavenly splendour which shed over her features an expression of gentleness and benevolence so sublime, that it was in itself sufficient to denote her origin.

A few moments of profound silence followed my first recognition of my celestial visitant, during which she regarded me with a smile of divine goodness, and when at last she began to speak, her words seemed the very echo of affection and tenderness, and, strange to say, they were breathed, not from the lips on which that smile was seated, but from a small, singularly-shaped harp, formed

of virgin silver, and slung from a slender ligature of silver cord about her waist. Her words were something to this effect:—

Spirit! still with clay opprest,
Soul! in weeds of woe still drest;
Dim of eye, and dull of ear,
Pilgrim of the lower sphere!

He whose image still ye wear,
He whose name ye love to bear;
He who through the mist of sin,
Condescends your soul to win,

He will grant the grace you pray'd,
He has sent me to your aid;
Come, and you may learn from me,
The Source of Human Harmony.

I sprang hastily from my recumbent position upon the sward, and stood transfixed before the heavenly speaker. My heart burning with pious gratitude, but my tongue fixed as with a ligature. The creature saw that I was without the power to follow her bidding, but that my spirit panted to obey her, and she raised her head, and looked towards the skies, while she spoke again:—

The symbol of Heaven,
Sweet sisters prepare;
The touch has been given,
The spirit will dare.

But dust cannot rise
O'er the regions of Death;
Till heaviness flies
From the star of our faith.

In an instant I was sensible of a soft lambent warmth upon my forehead, and at the same time I felt a new sensation of buoyancy in every part of my frame, which enabled me to mount into the air with my new companion as easily as I have ever trod the green-sward of the meadows. Up and up we went, cleaving the dewy atmosphere of the night, and arriving, at last, immediately under the celestial dome, among the radiant inhabitants of which, I found, to my indescribable ecstasy, that I had suddenly become enrolled.

What were my feelings of surprise and delight on discovering, as I entered beneath the azure canopy, that those beautiful orbs which human philosophers have so ignorantly and foolishly characterized as inhabited worlds, are neither more nor less than the starry diadems of a million of ministering spirits, similar to her who formed my guide to this enchanting region, and who are perpetually speeding to and fro on their missions of love and mercy to all parts of the universe.

They were all distinguished by the same exquisite delicacy of feature and proportion with my guide. They had also universally the same tiny harp of silver hung about their middle; but they were not all endowed with the same intense loveliness of expression. Each was fair, and gentle, and beneficent, but my guide seemed the ideal image of Love and Peace combined.

My conductress spoke to several of the spirits as we passed along, and made inquiries regarding their errands and destination; and each of her questions was answered with a sort of smiling deference which taught me the estimation in which she was held among the host of Heaven. I soon found out, from the general mode of address, that her name was Charity, and after that I gave myself freely up to the admiration with which she had inspired me.

Our aërial journey brought us at last to an immense circular door or gateway, which immediately set me meditating as to what place it could possibly hold among the heavenly bodies, for it was of a white sheeny radiance, which, joined to its great magnitude, could not fail to render it distinctly visible from the earth's surface, and I was entirely puzzled to conceive under what semblance I could ever have become familiar with it.

Meantime my companion tapped lightly on the glittering surface of the portal, and it suddenly moved upon its hinges, transfixing me by the singular phenomenon which its opening presented to me. It moved round upon a hinge of heavenly construction, and as it opened to us, the door seemed gradually to disappear, leaving portion after portion visible to us, like the revolving of a great planet, now half, now gibbous, now crescent, till at last the whole mystery was cleared up, and

the huge round gate of silver stood revealed as the full moon herself, which, instead of being a world without an atmosphere, as astronomers declare, turned out no more than one of the gates of heaven, which, turning round upon its curious hinges, as I have described, presents, in opening, all the alternations or phases of the moon with which we are familiar.

As I stept across the threshold of this magnificent portal, I suddenly found myself the occupant of a lordly chamber, in which myriads of ethereal beings were congregated, all completely engrossed by the same curious occupation. At a glance, these creatures seemed to present the same external attributes with my beautiful conductress, but a closer inspection, and a few minutes' longer familiarity with them, soon made me aware of a most vital difference. Some of them looked fair, and gentle, and comparatively happy—some of them gay and heedless—some of them darkened and stained by a blight, which I could not define, but which effectually changed the entire character of their appearance.

All of them, however, I remarked, without exception, seemed tinged by a shade of intense melancholy which showed itself differently in different natures, but which was nearly equally perceptible in all. Among the fairest of these beautiful spirits,

this mournful expression assumed the character of a chastened meekness. In others it bore the semblance of a careless levity, and on some it seemed to hang with a black and bitter shadow, which banished every other *trait* but that of gloom and misery, as nearly approaching to guilt as it was possible to imagine any feeling portrayed in lineaments naturally so beautiful.

I very soon remarked that these melancholy spirits were quite engrossed by their occupation, and a little attention on my part soon rendered the nature of this apparent to me, though its real object remained a mystery. I perceived that their continual employment was that of playing on the small silver harps worn by each of them, and this playing, though it often produced a most harmonious strain, still seemed to be performed in a most confused and promiscuous manner. For instance, no spirit thought of playing upon his own harp, but went wandering about perpetually touching the harps of all who came in his way, and producing sometimes most excellent music, and sometimes only a rude discord, according to the circumstances under which he played.

By-and-by I perceived them to be all under the direction of an imposing and majestic figure, who seemed their instructress. She looked like an old woman, for her hair was gray, and her form was

larger and more expanded than is usual in youth, but yet those appearances seemed to contradict themselves, for the silver hair had a peculiar radiance upon it, like the white sun-clouds in an April sky, and it floated in rich masses upon her shoulders, like the tresses of one in the prime of youth and health. Her countenance bore not a trace of age, for her eye was as keen as an eagle's, and every feature seemed to glow with a supernatural intelligence. She was gorgeously arrayed in flowers and gems, and tissues of most glorious fabric, and the beneficence of her rule was perceptible in the absolute submission and dependence of every spirit present on her influence.

I remarked that she instructed the spirits how to play upon each other's harps, and that previous to every lesson, she supplied the player with some delicate substance with which to touch the chords; for another peculiarity of these harps seemed to be, that they could only be played by some extraneous substance, either chosen by, or supplied to the player. After my curiosity and perplexity had fairly reached their height, I turned round to appeal to my guide and companion for some key whereby I might arrive at the true signification of the silver harps, and the singular manner in which they were played, and the beautiful melody which they produced. She seemed waiting to be ques-

injured by the attempts of an inexperienced player. It was like the tones of the nightingale, so unceasingly and interminably varied; so rich in every species of rare sound, and over and beyond all so unfailingly joyous and triumphant, that it roused the soul to rapture; but to hear it. I observed, that this beautiful strain was never produced but by a spirit, which seemed to exhibit some external distinction, which marked him a favourite of his great instructress, and a being of a superior order of existence. I gazed a long time before I could discover what really was the substance used in producing this peculiar strain; and at last, after much difficulty, I concluded it to be a small bag of curious network, composed of every substance that was rarest. There were golden fibres from the wing of the dragon-fly, for the woof and the weft was composed of the stamens of some rare exotic, while the whole glittered, and shone like an eastern jewel. I observed, that in the hands of every spirit, except those distinguished as I have said, this elegant fabric tore in pieces in the act of using, and produced only a rude and unpleasant jar; while employed by such as possessed the right to it, it never failed, whenever it might be applied, to produce the same divine melody. I tried hard to decipher the label, but it was so minute, I could

only succeed with extreme difficulty; at last I discovered in small shining characters, interwoven with the threads, the word "Tact," and inwardly acknowledged the influence of the subtle principle.

Nothing particular occurring to succeed the latter object in my regards, I turned round to take a general survey of the minstrels and their various successes. I observed a tiny sprig of green foliage without any flower, but of a delicious perfume, and bearing on its leaves the name "Good-nature," in very legible characters. I perceived, that whoever used this sprig, or to whatever harp it was applied, it never failed to elicit a pleasant strain, of no great power or richness, but of a sweet, tranquil, and well-sustained melody, exceedingly soothing to the ear, and invaluable on account of its security, no hand which ever used it having suffered a disappointment. The dark-browed spirits I observed always turned from the plain green sprig in disdain, as if they scorned a melody which lay within the reach of all. Indeed, the instrument most generally used among them was the inner part of an eagle's quill, which, as may be expected, produced from the harp, only a hollow and gloomy discord. It was labelled "Pride," and the sounds awakened by it seldom failed to throw a double shade of

misery over the face of the player. The bag of a honey-bee marked "Kindness," and the calyx of a daisy named "Humility," never failed in skilful hands to produce most lovely music, while the white petals of the hemlock, and the spur of the thorn labelled "Insolence," and "Sarcasm," were as infallible in awakening most jarring and melancholy discords. I remarked, that among the fair and happy-looking spirits, the swan's-down tuft, and the honey-bag, and the little violet, were in constant use; and so expert had they become in the use of them, that each strain seemed sweeter than the last. The gay and thoughtless spirits, in whom a touch of levity was at all times perceptible, had very frequent recourse to the plain green sprig, and so produced sometimes a very pleasant melody. They were very rarely betrayed into the use of the eagle's quill; but sometimes a sudden impulse would induce them to throw the thorn, in a careless manner, over any harp that might be near them; but I must confess the harshness of their own discord affrighted them immediately; and the green sprig was almost always applied to banish it. The dark-browed spirits turned with contempt from the swan's-down, and the daisy, and the violet; but I often saw them use the honey-bag by stealth, and most sweet music they made with it: and though they shrank always from the application of the white rose upon their

own harps, I saw them use it upon others' with admirable effect. What struck me most, was that the glittering network was under the entire command of many of these dark-browed spirits; but they seemed almost universally to hold the use of it in disdain, and would rather have resorted to the hemlock, and their favourite eagle's quill, than have deigned to play with it. I turned round to impart my observations to my conductress, but she placed her finger on her lips, and pointed to the great portal, which was once more turning on its hinge. In an instant, we were again beneath the azure dome, and I could see that more than half the spirits with their starry crowns had disappeared; and the few that remained had waxed pale and faint, as if from the reflex of the dawn. I turned once more to my beautiful guide, her beaming coronet still burned with a lustre which seemed to have borrowed from the cause which robbed her compeers. Her magical tones breathed once more upon my ear, and I held my breath, that none of them might be lost.

Child of dust! thine hour is done,
Day is dawning, night is gone;
Spirits to their homes have fled,
Evening blue hath vanished.

Hie thee to thy home on earth,
Muse on thoughts of holy birth,
Ponder thou the strains of love,
Thou hast heard in halls above.

Call to mind the mystic hours,
Thy spirit spent in Nature's bowers;
Ere the chain of dust had bound thee,
Ere the scenes of earth were round thee.

Weigh the powers which God hath given,
Judge what strains you played in heaven;
Let the self-same music breathe,
Round thee in thy place beneath.

Think that when the hour is come,
And the spirit seeks its home,
Brightest will the mansion be
Of him who dwelt in harmony.

Child of dust! my task is o'er,
On thy forehead beams no more,
Star of faith, to lead thee where,
Death shall next thy path prepare.

Ere the last strain of her melody had died away, I was again upon the fairy nook beneath the hazels. The dews of morning were heavy on the grass, but the brightest star of heaven was still gleaming in upon me, through the branches.

"Charming, charming," was re-echoed from every side, as Mr. Mackenzie closed his pretty manuscript. "What a lovely story, what a pity it is so short!" and the audience drew severally that breath with which people are wont to relieve themselves, after a season of engrossing attention.

"I admire nothing so much as the new system of astronomy," said Roderick laughing; "poor Sir John Herschel would look somewhat surprised, if he were to hear it broached."

"And I," rejoined Kenneth, "have taken such a fancy for the piece of rare network, that I shall set out on a pilgrimage in search of it to the foot of the rainbow."

"I should like very much to be one of the spirits in the azure dome," exclaimed Hector, who had no notion of happiness, superior to the liberty of limb and motion.

Little Evelyn contented herself with remarking that the spirit of charity must have been a very good spirit indeed; and that she should like a visit from her of all things, only not in the dark.

Half an hour passed, and the conversation of the young critics was not exhausted; but Mrs. Mackenzie remarked, that amidst the general clamour, Flora's voice was mute; she looked grave and thoughtful, and as if the story had completely engrossed her thoughts; but she made no remark upon it, and the party separated, and retired to bed without having heard an opinion from Flora, on her aunt's pretty tale.

The same night, however, when Mrs. Mackenzie paid her accustomed visit to the little girls before retiring to her own room, Flora detained her as she was pronouncing her good night, and drew her gently down upon the bed beside her.

"I know for what particular person you read

The Source of Harmony, dear Aunt," said she, "and I have been thinking over it all the evening, ever since uncle had finished reading, and I am so glad now to have an opportunity of telling you how well I understand it!"

"Well, my dear," said her aunt kindly, "in what way have you succeeded so well in applying the moral of my story."

"Why, I believe you think, aunt," said Flora, "because I think so myself, that if I were to make more frequent use of the swan's-down tuft, I should be sure to live in greater harmony with everybody."

"You are quite right, my dearest Flora," replied her aunt, "and you could have given me no greater pleasure, no better pledge of your own progress in virtue, than this readiness to discover your own little faults and failings; but there is more than the swan's-down tuft wanting, love. My Flora is one of those favoured spirits, who may have the entire command of the golden network whenever she pleases; she may not only dwell in an atmosphere of harmony, but she is capable of drawing from every heart with which she comes in contact, the sweetest music of which it is susceptible."

"Capable!" repeated Flora in a desponding voice, "Ah, then, aunt, you consider me as one

of the dark-browed spirits, who would rather at all times make use of the Eagle's quill than the golden network."

"No, my Flora, I look upon you as a very, very young spirit, who has been taught the sweetest of all minstrelsy in the hall of nature; but who has become somewhat out of practice since she assumed the human nature which she now wears."

Flora paused a moment, and then inquired, "What is it that you quite exactly mean by tact, aunt?"

"I mean the power of discriminating, or judging which mode of conduct and address is best suited to the persons and circumstances under which you are thrown; for example, when you asked Roderick, this morning, to mix the colours for you, if, instead of forcing your own business before him, as if it had been the only one worth attending to, and as if his occupation was a matter of no manner of thought to you whatever; if, instead of addressing him in this imperious manner, you had commenced with a kind apology for disturbing him, and a request that he would spare you just five minutes of his time, as a great favour, and when the colour was found wanting, if you had said, 'Oh, dear Roderick, if you will allow me, I will run up stairs

for your colour-box in a moment, and then, I will carry it back to the same place, when you are done;' then I am quite convinced, dear Flora, that Roderick would not only have mixed the colours, but he would have loved you all the better in the end, for having won him by your gentle manner, to do you an act of service, at some cost of convenience to himself."

"Yes, aunt," returned Flora, with great submission; "and about Kenneth too,—I know I showed a want of tact about Kenneth."

"Yes, my love," said her aunt, "you ought not to have called Kenneth a school-boy, nor to have held his opinion in contempt, as you did this morning. I remember, that you told me only a day or two ago, that Kenneth had given you quite a new idea on the subject of the priestess' drapery, and you did not seem to hold his remarks in contempt at all then."

"No, aunt, but I was provoked with him today, for comparing it to Musidora's wet bathing-gown, and I did not choose that he should suppose all the credit of it due to himself; I suppose that was the pheasant's feather, aunt, was it?"

"I suspect so, my Flora," answered Mrs. Mackenzie with a smile, "and a little of the eagle's too; but the golden network, even here, would have set all to rights again. If you had

exchanged your pettish tone for one of good-humoured raillery, and turned out your picture, and commenced arguing the relative merit due to each of you, then Kenneth's pretensions would have been checked, and harmony preserved at the same time, and you need not have been so sullen when he petitioned for liberty to inspect the drawings; a moment's exercise of self-command, my Flora, would have shown you that they could not be easily injured under your own immediate eye, and even had it been otherwise, you ought to have refused him in a more considerate manner."

"Yes, aunt, I know that, I refused in the precise way most likely to affront Kenneth."

"Well, my dear Flora," returned her aunt, "I need not tell you the difference between the foolish habit of flattering, and a gentle, and considerate care to avoid wounding, unnecessarily, the self-love of any one whom we may chance to address. Nothing can be more uncivil, nor more likely to raise up angry feelings against the person who acts so unwisely, as either directly or indirectly to depreciate anything, either personal or otherwise, belonging to those around us; when the thing discussed happens to be the tastes, talents, or acquirements of our neighbours, we ought to be peculiarly gentle in our treatment of

them. And as this sort of delicate tact is a property which we generally look for in a woman, so we are proportionately shocked and disappointed in the absence of it."

"I know," said Flora, after another thoughtful pause, "that it is my want of tact, or rather, I dare say, as you told me, aunt, my unwillingness to make use of it, which makes the boys often so disobliging to me; but then, aunt, when there is anything which I think it is but common justice that they should do for me, I feel too proud to ask it as if it were a favour. For instance, when Roderick had determined to ride the pony, and uncle said that he did not feel quite sure about my riding the gray horse—Don't you think it was Roderick's duty, and only justice to me, that he should give up the pony, and ride the gray horse himself?"

"Yes, my dear, and I have no doubt but Roderick felt exactly as you did on the subject," answered her aunt, "but then, Flora, you made your request, or rather your demand for the pony, in such an imperious tone, that I suppose he considered that you had no right to expect even justice from him on such terms. Depend upon it, my dear child, that love is always a sweeter incentive to people's actions than justice; and though *reflection* may lead us to pursue the latter with all our

hearts, yet the *impulse* will always go with the former. Remember, too, dear Flora, that gentleness is in every case not only the pleasantest but the wisest deportment we can wear, even though it should fail of success with those towards whom it may be exercised."

"But, aunt," interrupted Flora, "I could not bear to be refused anything which I had asked for kindly. I should be quite tempted to blame myself for having wasted gentleness at all upon one who could return it sulkily."

"Do not say so, Flora," returned her aunt, "we must have a higher motive for conducting ourselves well, than merely the results which our conduct will produce from others. Remember, that gentleness is quite as pleasing in the sight of God, whether it be successful in influencing others or not."

"Yes," agreed Flora, thoughtfully, "and I believe that if we *persevere* in a kind manner, we shall be sure to succeed in making people kind to us at last. I remark, that no one ever thinks of being unkind to Evelyn, and I suppose the reason is just because she has been so gentle all her life."

"I am quite sure, my Flora, that if we persevere in a kind manner—if we acquire the habit of controlling all our imperious tempers and proud thoughts, we shall not only live most happily

here, but we shall be preparing ourselves for higher and purer happiness in heaven. Let us always remember, my dearest child, that the gentler and lovelier our bearing is, the more nearly it becomes assimilated to that of the angels, among whom we so earnestly desire to secure a place, and that we can only secure that place by striving to make our temper such as will not sully nor profane it. Good night, my Flora, God bless you, love; you will soon gather good fruit from the seed that has been sown in your heart to-night." And as Mrs. Mackenzie stooped to kiss her, there was a tear on Flora's cheek—the surest proof that an appeal of the strongest kind had been made to her feelings.

CHAPTER VII.

A HAPPY SUNDAY.

THE happiest day in the week at Glenlee, was most certainly Sunday. Kenneth and Evelyn had all their lives been accustomed to look forward to it, throughout all the week, as the day when everything they loved best was placed within their reach, and from which all disagreeable subjects were excluded. They would have stared with surprise, if any one had complained in their presence, that Sunday was a long day, or a wearisome day, or a gloomy day, or a day that was less cheerful in any respect than other days; so entirely had their good and wise and kind mamma and papa, succeeded in teaching them how Sunday is to be spent with most chance of improving ourselves, and at the same time with most certainty of making us happy.

My dear little readers will be able to see how differently Sunday is looked upon by children who have kind parents to teach them these valuable things, and by poor little creatures who have never received any instruction on the subject, when I describe to them the first Sunday spent at Glenlee by Flora, and Roderick, and Hector.

It was a beautiful bright sunny morning, and

Margery entered the little girls' room, as usual, a quarter before seven, to call them and to assist at their toilette. In half an hour's time it was completed; and while little Evelyn retired to her own particular corner to perform her devotions, and to add to her usual little prayers the Collect for the day, and her peculiar petitions for Sunday morning, Flora snatched her bonnet from the peg, and gathering up her skipping-rope from one corner of the room, and her "Les Graces" hoops from another, she left the room, and was on the lawn with the boys in half a minute after. In a little while Evelyn descended also, looking so fresh and happy and pretty in her clean white frock, and her bright smooth curls,—One could have told that it was Sunday morning by Evelyn's face,—its expression was so gentle, and so good-humoured, and so much like that of one who looks forward to nothing but being happy.

When she came upon the lawn, the first thing she saw was Hector driving his hoop all round the shrubbery as quick as lightning, and shouting as loud as he could all the time, while Flora was skipping most industriously under the shade of the Thorn-tree; and Roderick and Kenneth were stretched out on the grass at some distance, the former busily engaged with the second volume of *The Talisman*, and the latter soberly caressing

Bran, the old stag-hound, and the respectable and faithful ally of the children.

"Come along Evie, I have been wearying to death for you," exclaimed Flora, as soon as Evelyn appeared. "Do come and let us have a game of "Les Graces," for I have made myself so hot with skipping that I cannot hold up another half dozen;" and in truth, a more deplorable contrast could not be imagined, than was presented by Flora's tired flushed face and the fresh smiling composure of her little cousin.

"'Les Graces,' dear Flora!" replied Evelyn in a tone of surprise; "oh! no, no, I can't come indeed; I should not think of such a thing, and I would advise you to carry the hoops up stairs again, and not throw away the morning by playing, and making yourself hot and uncomfortable."

"Throw away the morning! why, what is the use of Sunday morning, except that one may play as much as one likes then, without being afraid to stop for the sake of the lessons?" asked Flora, in a tone that sounded a little indignant. "I never heard that Sunday was of any use, except to play; is it not our only complete holiday?"

"Yes," replied little Evie, with a half puzzled look, "to be sure it is a complete holiday; and I know that the proper use of Sunday is to be happy in; but still—dear Flora—why I never

should dream of wasting Sunday in common plays."

"Common plays!" repeated Flora again, but this time a look of great interest and curiosity sparkled up in her face. "Perhaps you have some particular play for Sunday. Does your mamma allow you to have any sort of play to-day, which is not permitted on other days? because I shall be delighted to join you, if you will tell me what it is."

"Oh! no, no, that is not what I mean," answered Evelyn. "I don't mean that she allows a different sort of play, because we never play at all on Sunday; but I mean—"

"Never play on Sunday!" exclaimed Flora, with an accent of great indignation; "I never heard anything so unreasonable;—and so you are not allowed to play on the only entire holiday of the whole week! I hope aunt does not mean to deprive me of my play on Sunday, for I never spent one without it in my life, and should think it very unfair if I were obliged to—"

"Oh dear Flora, don't be afraid," answered Evelyn eagerly; "only wait till you have spent one of our Sundays, one of *mamma's* Sundays at Glenlee, and I am quite sure you will not once wish for your hoops, or your skipping-rope—no, not once during the whole day. I think I should

feel quite as much disappointed, if I were told to play my week-day plays on Sunday, as you did just now, dear Flora, when you supposed you were to be deprived of them. It would seem quite like wasting Sunday, to be doing then what one can do every day if one likes."

"And what do you do on Sunday, that you cannot do every other day?" asked Flora.

"Why you know Sunday is God's day," answered little Evelyn; "the day on which God wishes us to think of nothing but himself; and, in the first place, dear Flora, I should think it very ungrateful, when God gives us six other days to think of anything we like in, that we should refuse to think of Him, and admire Him, and talk about Him just on that one day."

Flora did not make any answer to this, and so little Evelyn went on talking: "Besides, dear Flora, I think that if we were not to have this day just to *remember ourselves* in, and to think about being good, and to hear how we may make ourselves good, I think we should soon forget all about being good, and become very wicked indeed."

"Humph!" said Flora, in rather a discontented tone. "And so I suppose your papa and mamma lecture you all day about being good and being wicked, till you are pretty nearly moped to death. I

must confess, I would much rather have my hoops and skipping-ropes."

"Oh, dear Flora, you altogether mistake," exclaimed Evelyn, very eagerly; "I assure you that mamma and papa never mope us at all. Oh! dear, dear, there is no time at all to be moped on a Sunday: I assure you there is no day half so amusing. And do you think I should like Sunday, if I were *lectured* all day? Only wait, dear Flora, till this day is over, and then if you tell me that it has not been a happy one, I will not wonder again that you long for your hoops and skipping-ropes."

"Why, what do you do on Sunday, that makes it so very charming?" asked Flora, with still a dissatisfied accent. "I suppose you have long lessons to learn, chapters out of the Bible, and long pages of catechism; and then, when your mamma tells you that they have been nicely got, you are very happy."

"Oh! dear, dear," said little Evelyn, laughing heartily at this picture of Sunday. "I don't think *that* would be making Sunday a nice day at all; I am sure it would not be making it a holiday. I assure you, I never learned a single line on Sunday. You and I learn our catechism every day you know throughout the week; and then on Sunday evening we say it over; this is no task at all, I can assure you, for papa has such a nice way

of hearing us, and asks us so much, and tells us so many amusing things about each of the questions, that I should be quite sorry when it was done, only that our reading comes after it."

"What reading?" asked Flora, as she now listened very attentively.

"Oh, our lecture; the only sort of lecture we ever have on a Sunday," said Evelyn, laughing; "and it is so very charming, that Kenneth and I only wish we might have such a one every day of the week."

"What is it about?" asked Flora again.

"We read out of the Old or New Testament: we are reading in the Old just now," answered Evie; "and then papa makes it all clear to us, and shows us what connection it has with the New, and describes to us all about the old Hebrews, and the people of those days; and explains all about those manners and customs which I do not understand half so well when I read about them in the words of the Bible."

"Well, I should like that," said Flora; "but that does not last all day, does it?"

"Oh, no," returned Evie, laughing; "that does not commence till the evening; but then we have long talks about a great many things with mamma and papa besides. You know, Flora, you said you liked nothing so much as for mamma or papa to

talk to us, without thinking of anything, but just answering our questions. I assure you, that they never talk half so much, nor half so pleasantly to us, as on a Sunday; you cannot help liking it, Flo!"

"Well, but you go to church, I suppose!" said Flora, persevering in her complaints. "Surely you don't think that very pleasant, to sit boxed up for two or three hours, listening to what you cannot understand."

"But, indeed, I can understand it almost all," answered Evie, very earnestly. "Surely, dear Flo, you can understand the prayers in your prayer-book. And I assure you, that if you repeat them over very carefully in church, along with the clergyman, and try to *feel* as if you were saying them for your ownself, you cannot think how pleased and happy it will make you; and how anxious to be good; and how much as if you would *succeed* in being good if you tried. And then the time seems so short; I assure you, Flora, if you pay attention to the prayers, and try to say them all, as if they were your own petitions to God,—I assure you, the hour of church is over so quickly, that you would suppose it had just begun."

Flora did not answer for some minutes: she seemed to be pondering in her mind all that

Evelyn had told her of the occupations of Sunday. She could not quite bring her mind to look with Evie's eyes, on the prospect of a Sunday, so differently spent from any which she had ever passed before; and during which the most favoured pastimes of the week, were only to be looked upon as a waste of time and enjoyment. Some little lurking dread, that she should be obliged to restrain her spirits to some rule of gloomy or morose constraint still remained; but she felt considerable curiosity to judge for herself on the correctness of Evie's representations; and she forgot the boisterous play that had so lately engaged her, in the desire to watch for what different species of amusement might come within her reach."

"And what does your Sunday begin with, Evie?" asked she, after a short pause of reflection upon the novelties just suggested to her mind.

"Oh! prayers, prayers, of course," answered Evelyn; "everybody comes to prayers at nine o'clock; and I dare say the bell will ring presently. I think, dear Flo, you will not have any more than time to run up stairs with the hoops, and to have your hair smoothed before it rings."

"Well, I must confess, Evie, you look much more like a lady than I do," answered Flora, good humouredly, as she put up her hand to smooth back the disordered curls. "I hope you will not

go to prayers before I come back;" and off she ran to follow Evie's wise and gentle advice.

"Well, Evie," said Roderick, as he closed his book, and rose to join his little cousin on the walk, "what have you and Flora been gossiping about so long? I think I have occasionally heard snatches of a very learned discussion, in which wise Evelyn has been trying to teach silly Flora the use of Sunday,—is that true?"

"No, indeed, cousin Roderick," answered Evie, blushing a good deal at what sounded to her very much like a banter, "I was only trying to describe to her how mamma would show her *that*."

"Well, my dear little cousin, and very kind and good natured of you it was," answered Roderick; "and I am just come for the purpose of having a little talk with you myself upon the same subject. I heard all you were saying to Flora about the employments of Sunday, and I want to know whether you never read for your own amusement, without your mamma and papa reading with you?"

"Oh! yes, cousin," answered Evelyn, "very often indeed; for instance, when the morning or evening rains so heavily that mamma does not like us to go to church, or if papa should be ill or obliged to go from home, and we are deprived of

our lecture with him, then he or mamma gives us something to read that we can understand; but these are never such nice Sundays: I am always vexed when I am obliged to read by myself."

"I suppose you never read such books as this?" said Roderick, pointing to his volume of *The Talisman*.

"Oh! no, no, never," answered Evelyn, looking as if the question rather amused her; "we should think it quite wasting our time, and throwing away the opportunity of reading or hearing what was more interesting."

"And what do you consider more interesting than a beautiful tale like this?" pursued Roderick.

"Oh! cousin, anything, everything connected with Sunday is surely more interesting than mere week-day things," answered the innocent philosopher very simply; "everything that we learn on Sunday is so great, and so wonderful, and so magnificent, besides being so sweet and so beautiful, that I should not think of condescending to notice things that were *merely* week-day, when I could have all those."

"What do you mean by being *merely* week-day, dear Evelyn? are there some things, then, *more* belonging to Sunday than others? I thought you would at least be able to draw a complete line of distinction between such things as were

appropriate to Sunday, and those that were not. I cannot imagine anything belonging to Sunday a *little*, and not altogether."

"Why, you know, Roderick," answered little Evelyn, with a very logical look, "people may talk about the same thing in a different humour, or for a different purpose, and then it appears as though the thing itself were quite different; for instance, anything that can give us information about God,—about God's character,—or his purposes in making things,—or in arranging and assorting everything we see in the world; anything that can make us admire him more, or can make us see greater proofs of how wise he is, and how kind, and watchful, and mindful, he is of all his creatures, and all their different wants and necessities,—these are all Sunday things, dear Roderick, whenever we talk about them in this way, even though they may be quite trifles in themselves. This is what I mean by the same thing being talked about in different ways; and if you only heard my mamma and papa, how much of this kind they always find to say about everything, you would perceive that almost anything was with them a subject for Sunday."

"Well, but you think that *The Talisman* is not a book that they would approve of for Sunday, and so I had better go and put it in the book-case again, lest it should displease them to find me

reading it," said Roderick, making a move towards the house.

"Oh no, you had better wait till they come down," answered Evie, "and then mamma will tell you so prettily, and so kindly, *why* it is not fit for to-day, that you will only wonder why you did not discover for yourself."

But Roderick chose to carry his book into the parlour, and by the time he came out again, he found Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie, with little Evelyn, and Flora and Kenneth, approaching from different sides of the lawn.

"How beautiful it is, dear mamma!" said Evie, with an involuntary glance upwards and around upon the bright sky and the soft and balmy air. "I am so glad it is fine to-day. I love a fine Sunday better than any fine day in the week."

"So do I, my Evelyn," replied her mamma, as she slipped her arm through Roderick's, and joined the children in their walk. "I love a fine Sunday too, and always feel inclined to thank God for a peculiar providence when he sends us one. Why do you prefer Sunday to be a fine day, Evie?"

"Why, mamma, because everything looks happier on a fine day, and because I am so fond of a Sunday walk, and because I do not like staying at home from church on account of the

rain, and because—because when I am *happy*, I always like to be *quite*, quite happy, mamma."

Mrs. Mackenzie and Roderick laughed at Evie's numerous reasons in favour of a fine Sunday, and then Roderick asked—

"And why do *you* feel so grateful when Sunday is a fine day, aunt?"

"Because, my dear," replied she, "so many people profit by the enjoyment it brings with it; there are so many who look forward to Sunday for the entire amount of pleasure and relaxation which they enjoy throughout the week; so many who do not even breathe the air of heaven with freedom or joy, except on Sunday."

"Oh! dear mamma, who can they be?" asked little Evelyn, in a tone of distress; "surely everybody may contrive to do that, however busy they are."

"No, dear Evie, you forget those poor people who are shut up in towns, working in close dark workshops, or in crowded manufactories; they are very different from our happy and healthy peasants, who have no hard work, except such as may be pursued under the pure skies and in the blessed sunshine."

"Oh! how sad, dear mamma," replied Evie, pathetically; "how I wish there were no manufactories, and that all the poor people earned their

livelihood by making hay, and ploughing, and casting peats. Don't you wonder, mamma, that God does not choose to see his people happy and innocent in the country, rather than having them mewed up in such terrible places as those?"

"Depend upon it, my Evelyn, that God always loves best to see his people happy and innocent," answered Mrs. Mackenzie; "but if He were to make them all so, against their will, or without any effort of their own, what would be the use of sending them into this world at all—why not just take them to heaven at once, where all is happiness and innocence together?"

"Oh! yes," returned Evie, as if recollecting herself, "I know that every one is sent to *learn* how to be good in this world first; and, perhaps, those poor *town* people do not deserve to be so happy as our peasantry, hey mamma?"

"I do not think that can be it, dearest Evelyn," said her mamma, "neither could we at all be capable of judging although it were so; but, indeed, those very people whom we are pitying have their own sources of enjoyment, which, I dare say, they would not exchange for those which we consider so far superior."

"Oh! mamma," said Evelyn, in a tone of remonstrance, "surely that must be impossible; there surely cannot be any one so stupid as that."

"Suppose, dear Evelyn," answered her mamma, with a smile, "suppose a little Indian girl brought up amongst rich fruits and beautiful flowers, and under hot sunny skies, such as would make you and me faint and droop by their fervour; suppose she were to argue about you, and say, 'that poor little girl, born in such a cold country, not able to venture out of doors without a bonnet and tippet, and obliged to sit in the house all day, and pore over books, instead of running wild among the flowery deserts as I do; I wonder if she is very wicked that God has chosen to punish her by sending her into so miserable a place;' should not you be very apt to laugh at such a foolish child, and wonder at her stupidity, in not perceiving at once how much more favoured by God you were than a little wild ignorant savage like her?"

"Oh! dear, yes, mamma, to be sure," answered Evelyn.

"Well, dear, then you see that one human being cannot judge of another's happiness," returned Mrs. Mackenzie. "God is so impartial in his distribution of benefits, and has displayed so much wisdom in adapting people's tastes and habits to the situations in which he has placed them, that he may be said to have bestowed a pretty equal share of happiness on all, and where it appears otherwise to us, and one community

seems more favoured than another, you may depend upon it the fault lies in our inability to perceive that the one would be incapable of enjoying the happiness bestowed upon the other, and is, in fact, infinitely more satisfied with its own peculiar destiny."

Flora had joined the little party while Mrs. Mackenzie's argument was going on, and it interested her so much, that she felt quite disappointed when her uncle's approach turned the course of the conversation. She was surprised to find how many new ideas were awakened by the apparently simple truths she heard her aunt express, and how much occupation it gave her mind to receive and consider them. She had not half finished her reflections, when the bell rang, and the whole party returned to the breakfast-room to prayers. Flora could scarcely dismiss these new subjects of reflection, even when she knelt down beside her aunt at the sofa: she could not immediately answer, nor get rid of the speculations that rose in her mind about the nature and degree of human happiness; and she was busy pondering the sort of tastes and habits with which she had herself been endowed, and the precise situation of life most likely to accord with them, when she suddenly remembered what Evelyn and she had been

talking of, about attending to the prayers in church, and applying each petition to their own peculiar case, and as she thought of making an experiment with her uncle's prayers, she suddenly found her attention fixed by the purport of them.

Flora had never been at all in the habit of attending during prayers to what was said. She repeated the Lord's Prayer audibly at the conclusion, when the rest did it, and she generally felt very grave and solemn as she did so; but it was never on account of the words she had been listening to, for of these she was generally quite ignorant; but this morning, when it occurred to her to listen, and she heard her uncle, in a tone of the tenderest affection, pray for the children, that they might experience the true and real happiness of God's holy day, and be led to love it, and the great and glorious Friend whose gift it was, his words sounded so kind and sweet, that Flora could not help loving her uncle while she listened, and quite longed after she had risen from her knees to thank and kiss him in return.

Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie were both members of the Church of England, and were fortunate enough to have in their village one of those pretty little Episcopalian churches, which one still sees occasionally in the Highlands of Scotland. It lay about half a mile distant from the house of

Glenlee, but, unless it was very wet indeed, the Mackenzies always walked to church; because Mr. Mackenzie said, that Sunday ought to be a holiday and a day of rest to man and beast, and he did not choose either that the horses should have the labour of dragging the carriage on a Sunday, or that old Hugh and Angus should have the trouble of getting it ready.

Accordingly, more than half an hour before Morning Service commenced, the whole party from Glenlee set off together, along the sweet shady footpath that led along the margin of the lake to the church. It was a small, simple building—the very smallest church Flora had ever entered, but as she took her place in the pew, and glanced round upon the congregation, she thought she had never seen anything prettier or sweeter than the appearance it presented; for the doors and windows stood all wide open, and the sunbeams and the fresh breeze entered together, and fell upon rows of old white-haired shepherds, with their chequered plaids and their wise-looking sheep-dogs,—which, to Flora's great surprise, lay each at his master's feet, along the aisle,—and upon the snowy caps and kerchiefs of the old women, and the smart gay-coloured tartan plaids of the young ones.

As the service commenced, Flora remembered

her former resolution of attending to the prayers, but before fixing her attention she glanced up the pew to see how its different occupants were engaged. At the very top sat Hector, and next to him his kind aunt. Flora had never seen Hector behave with decent sobriety in church before. On every other occasion he kept up one perpetual fidget from the time he entered—now yawning audibly—now kicking the foot-board till half the people in the neighbourhood looked round in surprise—now scribbling or crumpling up the leaves of his prayer-book—and now tormenting Flora herself by crushing her dress, or soiling her boots, or wilfully inflicting injuries on her gloves or her reticule. To-day, to her extreme surprise, she saw no symptom of fidget in his deportment, though it was clearly not the novelty of the scene which engrossed him, for his employment was in turning up the places for his aunt, who kept him constantly employed, and seemed to place so much value on his services, that Hector felt quite interested by the novel sensation of finding himself of use.

Flora could not help admiring the gentle kindness of her aunt, and the skill with which she kept Hector quiet, when every species of threat or punishment would have failed in its effect; but a glance at little Evie, and the grave and earnest

look with which she was bending over her prayer-book, recalled Flora to the closer observance of her own deportment, and the profitless tendency of her observations on others.

Have any of you, my dear children, ever seriously tried this nice plan of Evelyn's, and while you leant down over your prayer-book, earnestly striven to follow with your mind and heart each sentence of the prayers as it was repeated? Have you ever tried to recollect all your faults, and to feel sorry for them, as you have repeated these words, "We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep: we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and there is no health in us?" If you have not, I strongly recommend you to try it next Sunday. You are quite sure to find that if you do it with all your hearts, it will have the effect of making the hours of service pass so lightly and pleasantly, that you will feel quite sorry when they are ended; instead of wearying, and yawning and fidgeting, as Hector used to do, and thinking the hour was never coming which was to release you from church. I assure you that when Flora left the pew to return home, she felt a glow of happy and peaceful tranquillity in her heart, which she had never experienced from being at church

before, and she could not help wondering why she had never thought of trying the same recipé of her own accord. She thought that Roderick must have been engaged in the same way, for he looked so pleased and occupied; and as for little Hector, he did not once let go his aunt's hand, but walked all the way home by her side, looking up in her face, and listening to what she said, with a smile of great cordiality and good humour.

Between services, Mrs. Mackenzie always visited Mr. Stewart's school, and to-day she allowed Flora and Evelyn to accompany her, instead of returning home, and the little girls spent a very pleasant half-hour among the Sunday scholars, hearing them repeat their hymns and catechism, and read their lesson out of the Bible.

It was a great novelty to Flora, who had never been in any school before but her own, where French verbs and Italian exercises were generally the tasks hummed over throughout the class-room; and to hear the rude accents and simple acquirements of the little peasants amused her exceedingly, and somehow tended, she could not very well say why, to preserve in her mind the sort of *Sunday* feeling which it had already imbibed.

When service was over in the afternoon, the sun was still shining bright and warm, and the extreme loveliness of the evening tempted our

party to prolong their walk for an hour before dinner.

Their way led them by a beautiful wood, that sloped down to the margin of the lake, and through which a little wild path turned and twisted till it led them almost all the way home. It was that sweet hour of the day when the sunbeams are beginning to slant a little, and as they came glimmering through the foliage of the tall trees, they made chequers of light and shade upon the path, and lay upon the surface of the water till it flashed as if with a million of diamonds.

Nothing could be more beautiful or interesting than that walk through the wood: every moment the footsteps of the party disturbed some living thing from the security of its solitude. Now a sly-looking little squirrel would peep at them with its glancing eyes, and then shoot up to the top of a tall tree, like quicksilver, and now a poor little frightened rabbit would start into view, and then fly back again, scuttling into the covert of the low brushwood. At one moment the soft cooing of the ring-dove came from the distance, and by-and-by it was put to silence by the shrill harsh cry of a pheasant; for this beautiful wood was the property of a gentleman, who made it part of his preserve, and so it abounded with those beautiful creatures.

At every step the little girls would stoop to

pick up a pretty specimen of some wood-plant, and over and over again was Flora subjected to the sly quizzical jests of her cousin Kenneth, as often as she betrayed any portion of that town-bred ignorance, which had once before led her to mistake a primrose for a cowslip.

"Look, mamma; see, see, what is that robin doing?" said little Evelyn, in an eager tone, as she pointed out a robin perched on a great stone, at a little distance.

"I don't know, dear, but if you wait till we come a little nearer we may, perhaps, find out," said her mother, as she advanced with a more cautious step towards the little bird. They very soon discovered that he had got a large worm in his beak, and was nibbling and tearing it, while the poor worm writhed about in a very painful and disagreeable manner.

"Oh! mamma, mamma, what is he doing? what a cruel bird! what can he be tormenting the worm for? Oh, naughty bird; I cannot believe he is a robin, mamma, can you?" exclaimed Evelyn, in great distress.

"Art thou the bird whom man loves best,
The pious bird, with the scarlet breast,
Our little English robin:
The bird that comes about our doors,
When Autumn winds are sobbing:
The bird, who, by some name or other,
All men who know thee call their brother—
The darling of children and men?"

said her papa, with a smile, and quoting from a little poem with which Evelyn was, and I doubt not you also, my dear children, are quite familiar.

"What a vile, barbarous little creature!" exclaimed Flora, in an indignant tone, while Mr. Robin very gaily finished his meal, pecking and chirping at the same time, with every appearance of good-humour and satisfaction. "I shall never love a robin again; I shall never have the least pleasure in brushing away the snow to spread crumbs for him again, cruel, hard-hearted little animal."

Flora looked quite in a passion, while Evelyn could hardly restrain her tears at the sight of the tragedy that was acting before her.

"I must confess, young ladies," said Mr. Mackenzie, "you make a mighty piece of work about this poor bird dining off an earth-worm, and yet, I dare say, when we go home, you will each of you despatch your wing of fowl, or your slice of beef or mutton, without the least compunction."

"Oh! uncle, surely that is quite different," exclaimed Flora; "the fowls or animals we eat at dinner are not put to the torture, like this poor worm; besides it seems so inconsistent that a little gentle creature, like the robin, should be so cruel and rapacious—it makes me feel quite vexed."

"My dear child, consider for a moment, and you will soon get rid of this vexation," said her kind aunt. "God made all animals more or less to prey upon each other. One of the purposes for which that poor worm was created, was that it might be food for the robin; why then should you be vexed by seeing it fulfil the end of its being?"

"Oh! aunt, aunt, how dreadful!" answered Flora. "I cannot, indeed, consider that it was kind or good in God to create these poor worms for the purpose of being torn to pieces, and devoured;" and she looked quite shocked and disgusted by the idea.

"Do you think that it was kind or good in Him to create the lower animals at all, Flora?" asked her aunt; "to give them the green earth and the bright sunshine to live in, and to provide them with instincts which secure to them not only the means of sustenance, but a thousand sources of enjoyment besides? Do you think it is a sign of his bounty and his love, to afford them their term of existence at all?"

"Oh! yes, aunt," returned Flora, "surely it is, so long as they are safe and happy."

"And do you think that it would be wise or kind in God to allow these animals to multiply? to let them live on and remain in the earth, till there was not only too little food to sustain them, but

till the comfort and happiness of man was destroyed by their extreme abundance?"

"Oh! no, aunt; but why may they not die natural deaths as we do?" persisted Flora.

"I think it is the great love and wisdom of God which prevents this, my Flora," answered her aunt; "nothing can be more painful than to see any animal become the victim of a lingering disease. Have you forgotten when you yourself petitioned the other day, that the poor chicken might be put out of its pain, for that it made your heart ache to see it stand with drooping wings and glazing eyes in the yard? Was not the very desire you felt that its pain should cease a sort of tacit proof that a violent death is preferable among the lower animals to a death by sickness?"

Flora paused a few moments to ponder this idea, and then she said, "It is so very rarely that we find a case of sickness among the lower animals, aunt, that I suppose God originally intended that they should most generally die by violence."

"I have not the least doubt but it is so," replied her aunt; "and so, my Flora, let us take poor robin into favour again, with the reflection that, in the cruel mode in which he dined to-day, he only followed up the end of his own being, as well as that of the creature upon which he preyed."

"Look, Flora! see, see, watch for a moment, and you will see this lesson illustrated," said her uncle, as he caught hold of her arm, and pointed to the spot where the robin, when she last looked, had been as busily engaged as ever. A short, sharp cry, peculiarly expressive of terror and helplessness, directed her attention to the spot, and she saw robin still perched upon the same fragment of rock, but cowering and fluttering under the gaze of a hawk, that was poised in the air, and just prepared to pounce upon him.

"Oh! uncle, aunt, what shall we do, he will certainly be killed?" exclaimed she; all her resentment against the Robin, completely swallowed up in compassion for his approaching fate; while Evelyn stood clasping her father's hand in speechless dismay, almost as effectually paralyzed as the robin himself. In another minute the scene was ended, the hawk had struck his sharp talons into the poor little struggling robin, and borne him swiftly through the air above their heads.

"You must not refuse to the hawk the indulgence and consideration you agreed to extend to the robin," said Mr. Mackenzie, in reply to the look of distress, which Flora turned upon him, "Remember the poor hawk is as much in want of a dinner as he was; and very likely is by this

time regaling a gaping family of hungry young ones upon the banquet."

"It *seems* very dreadful," said Flora, drawing a long breath, "it seems very shocking, that all these little creatures, so full of life and gaiety, should be exposed to such continual dangers."

"Do not say so, my dear child," interposed her aunt, in the same sweet tones, with which she always mingled comfort in her remonstrances. "The dangers are no source of suffering to them, because our heavenly Father has kindly made them unconscious of their existence; rather let us look round upon the exhaustless love and care displayed upon their means of subsistence; let us trace out the endless sources of enjoyment, and happiness, and even of safety, which are allotted to them; and then we shall soon cease to have any wonder to bestow upon the fact that they must die at last. Come, and let us all sit down to rest for a few moments on this stone, and I think I can show you what will amuse you. I have seen something dart out and in from beneath that tuft of hazel-leaves every minute for a long time; and if it is what I suspect, it is sure to afford us a pretty and useful lesson."

The whole party seated themselves accordingly, and Mrs. Mackenzie having pointed out the spot to which their observations were to be directed,

every eye was curiously turned upon it. In one moment afterwards, the same tiny object darted from under the branch of hazel to a tree at some distance; but so small was the creature, and so lightning-like its motions, that it was impossible to distinguish even what it was. It made about three such flights as this in a minute, and at last having lighted on a bough, very near the party of watchers, they were rewarded by a full view of its tiny person.

"Beautiful little creature!" exclaimed Flora; "is it a bird, or a butterfly, or a humble-bee?" And, indeed, its slender and minute shape, and the tuft of bright yellow feathers upon its head, was enough to leave the question a little in doubt.

"It is a Golden-crested Wren, the very smallest of our native birds," replied her aunt; "and I wish you to pay attention to the activity of its movements, while I explain their purpose. That little creature is engaged in supplying its mate and her young with food, and if you will remark the industry and fidelity with which it fulfils its duty, it will obtain possession of your affections immediately. I have watched it, sometimes for an hour together, and once during the hour, I saw it carry food eight and forty times into its nest."

"One would not believe it possible for a crea-

ture so very tiny to undergo the fatigue of so many, and such rapid flights," observed Roderick, who was also watching the little bird with great gravity and interest.

"And yet," said Mr. Mackenzie, "this little animal will undertake a flight of fifty miles over the stormy seas which divide Orkney from Shetland, and where no opportunity of rest can be afforded it, for the mere purpose of incubation; as soon as the young are fledged, it returns."

"Dear uncle, how strange!" answered Roderick; "one might suppose that, in this case, instinct was for once at fault, since there can be no such difference between the climates of Orkney and Shetland as to tempt such a migration."

"And yet so far from instinct being at fault," answered his uncle, "it is a beautiful and remarkable instance of the unerring nature of instinct which leads this bird to migrate; for the young of this minute creature require a particular species of insect food, which Orkney does not furnish, and consequently there is no instance of the Golden-crested Wren producing its eggs in Orkney."

"Oh, what a dear, wise, little considerate bird!" exclaimed Evelyn; "can the Golden-crested Wren be tamed, papa?"

"No, my dear, the strength of its little muscles is what makes it so active and swift in its flight;

and that extreme activity is what enables it to bear the cold in winter; so, of course, if you were to deprive it of the opportunity of this activity, its strength would fail, and it would perish with cold."

"There is one other curious circumstance connected with this dear little bird, which I am willing to show you, even at the expense of a little fright to the lady," said Mrs. Mackenzie; "it is the stratagem by which she attempts to frighten intruders from touching her nest, when she finds herself devoid of all other means of defence. Roderick, you are the only one in whom I have sufficient confidence to entrust him with the commission. Wait till the next flight of the faithful little bird, and while he is gone, approach your hand to the spot where you may suppose the nest to lie."

Roderick did very gently as he was bidden, and even at the distance at which they were seated, the whole party could hear the hissing sound, like that of a nest of adders, by which my lady-wren strove to menace the approaching enemy. To repair the mischief of frightening the poor little bird, the party imme diately rose and left her neighbourhood amid various exclamations on the singular sagacity or *instinct* of the Golden-crested Wren.

"I know you meant me to find out God's

wisdom and goodness in the habits and constitution of this bird, aunt," said Flora, "and I have been quite able to do it. I can see it in the extreme swiftness and activity which enable it to make so many journeys in a day for food; and in the instinct which makes it build its nest in the place where the proper food is to be obtained, and in the cunning which makes it imitate the adder, that it may succeed in frightening enemies, which it would be quite powerless to strive against. The Golden-crested Wren is a very happy little bird; its existence is a very valuable gift, aunt."

Mrs. Mackenzie bent down and kissed Flora, as a reward for her docility and acuteness; and in a few minutes afterwards, they emerged from the wood, and entered upon a low swampy meadow, through which the path still led along the edge of the lake.

But their observations on birds were not over, for Kenneth pointed out a heron which was skimming along the surface of the water, every now and then sending forth its shrill, melancholy cry, like a note of distress. And Mrs. Mackenzie explained how it first fixed its eye upon a little fish in the clear waters below, and then pounced down upon it, and speared it with its long slender bill. Then, while Flora's commiseration of the poor little victims of birds

of prey returned for a while, little Hector shouted with delight at the discovery of a plover's nest among the long, sedgy grass of the meadow. This bird makes no further place of habitation for itself, than the impression of its breast among the long grass; and so the eggs—half-a-dozen of pretty large green marbled-looking eggs—were quite exposed to the gaze or even the footsteps of the passer-by.

"What a curious colour the eggs are, aunt," said Flora; "one could scarcely detect them at first, they are so like the colour of the reeds themselves."

"Well, dear Flora, can you perceive no end that may be served by giving this colour to the plover's eggs?" asked Mrs. Mackenzie.

And Flora, after a moment's reflection answered, "Yes, aunt, since the plover was to make its nest in such an exposed situation, God gives its eggs the best chance of escape possible, by making them the colour of the reeds and grass."

It wanted but a quarter to six when the party reached home; and Margery was sadly afraid, in the first place, that her young ladies had overtired themselves, and, in the second, that they should be too late for dinner; but Flora assured her, that she would gladly have done without her dinner altogether, if she might thus have prolonged the walk for another hour.

After dinner, was the time when the children said their catechism; just when papa had finished his wine, and before they went into the drawing-room to tea. The catechism, as Evie had predicted, was no trouble at all, since it was merely saying over the lesson which had been thoroughly learnt throughout the week; and her uncle's manner of hearing it was so nice, so lively and familiar, and showed so little of the ceremony or restraint of school hours, that Flora felt quite sorry when it was done.

"And now," said Mr. Mackenzie, as he shut the book, "since the evening still continues so fine, shall we go out of doors, and have our talk upon the lawn?"

"Oh! no, no, no—please, do not go out of doors," exclaimed little Evelyn, in a tone of entreaty. "If we go out of doors, we shall have no lecture to speak of, and I am *so* anxious about this chapter; do, there is a good papa, do, do let us read first, and after that we shall all go out together, and spread your great cloak upon the grass, and we shall be quite in time to see the stars come out even then."

"We never read comfortably nor methodically out of doors," said Kenneth, as he rose and placed the large Bible before his father. "And I am very anxious, too, to hear about this chapter for some things in it puzzle me exceedingly."

So papa turned over the great leaves of his Bible, till he came to the fourth chapter of Genesis; and after the children had all found the place in their own books, they began to read each a verse alternately, beginning with Roderick, till Flora had read the seventh verse, and then her uncle bade her stop. The seven verses contained an account of the first sacrifice offered by Cain and Abel, and of God's respect unto the one, and his rejection of the other.

"Well, my dear Kenneth," said his papa, "what is it you find so difficult of comprehension in this story?"

"Why, papa," returned Kenneth, shutting his book, and preparing for a long discussion, "I am quite at a loss to understand *why* Cain's offering should be rejected, and Abel's approved. It seems to me that, previously to this, there is no mention made of Cain's wickedness, so that we are not quite at liberty to *suppose*, without being told, that it was offered in a spirit which God disapproved; in short, I should rather say, if I were reading this chapter, and judging quite for myself, that Cain had never been wicked at all, until this rejection of his offering woke up evil passions in his heart."

"We are certainly not directly informed of Cain's character, previous to this, inasmuch as

this sacrifice is the first transaction in which Cain is introduced to us at all," answered Mr. Mackenzie. "And yet I think I can prove to you, that it was exclusively the effect of Cain's evil passions, and of God's disapprobation of them, and their results, which occasioned the rejection of his offering. In the first place, there is the difference in the *nature* of the two sacrifices to be considered; Abel, a keeper of sheep, brings of the firstlings of his flock an offering to God; Cain, a tiller of the ground, brings of the first fruits of the earth."

"Oh, uncle," interrupted Flora, "that difference has struck me very often indeed. Cain's seems so much the more acceptable offering of the two, so much the more *innocent*, and it seems to me so much more likely that God should approve of him, who brought the fruits of the earth, and offered them in sacrifice, than of him who took away the life of an unoffending animal, that he might bring it as an offering to the God of love, and mercy, and kindness."

Mr. Mackenzie smiled at the frankness with which Flora stated her objections, and then he asked, "Do you remember, my Flora, who it is that says, 'without the shedding of blood there shall be no remission of sins?'"

"Yes, uncle, I remember," answered Flora,

"but that was said of our Lord Jesus Christ, and could not apply to the sacrifices that were offered up before he was born."

"Yes, my dear, it applies to all sacrifices whatsoever," answered her uncle, "though it was not expedient, in God's eyes, that men should *perceive* the connexion which subsisted between the one great sacrifice and atonement offered up in the person of our Lord, and all the other sacrifices which men had been offering up from the beginning of time.—Though he did not choose that this should be made apparent till after the sacrifice of Christ, yet when that sacrifice *was* completed, all the world could see that the previous sacrifices were so many types or symbols of it, to show that all along, from the commencement, it had been the purpose of God to redeem the world, by the shedding of his dear Son's blood, —a spotless being offered up in sacrifice for the sins of a guilty multitude."

The children paused for a few moments to take in these new ideas, and then Roderick said, in a reflective tone, "I do not think, uncle, that Cain could be blamed for not observing this, since we have no reason to believe that God had *taught* mankind the sort of sacrifice they were to offer him previously to this first sacrifice of all."

"I do not agree with you, Roderick, in believ-

ing this the first sacrifice of all," said Mr. Mackenzie. "I think that Adam offered bloody sacrifices, even in the Garden. Look over the chapters that come before, and try whether you can find any words which lead you to believe that this sacrifice of Abel's was *not* the first living thing that had been slain."

The children bent down over their Bibles, and searched for a long time in vain, and then Flora uttered an exclamation of pleasure, and began to read, "'Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them;' the animals from which these skins were taken must have been killed, I think, uncle."

"Quite right, my dear Flora," answered Mr. Mackenzie, "they must certainly have been killed, since we are nowhere allowed to believe in the occurrence of what is called a *natural* death in the garden of Eden; and since animal food was then unknown among mankind, there is no other purpose for which they could have been killed but that of sacrifice; so you see we have proved that Cain had not the excuse of ignorance in offering a sacrifice, the nature of which insured its rejection."

"Well, but then, papa, you know," said little Evie, looking very earnest, and very much en-

grossed by the subject, "poor Cain had no flocks to offer; he was not a keeper of sheep, and so he had nothing of his own, except the first fruits of the earth."

"Oh! my Evie, there comes the true reason at last," answered her papa; "this proud, self-sufficient Cain, not finding it quite convenient to worship God, in the regular and proper manner which had been prescribed to him, begins to argue with himself, and say, 'Why should I give myself any trouble about this sacrifice? Religion does not depend upon outward forms; and so, if I offer sacrifice at all, it is enough to prove my respect to God's commands; there is no reason why I should barter my grain or fruits with Abel for a lamb from his flock; I will offer my own goods, and then I shall have done as much as is required of me.'"

The children remained silent for a few moments, and then Flora, as usual, found courage enough to express what all the rest were thinking in their hearts.

"But do you know, uncle," said she, "I cannot think that it was at all wrong in Cain, to consider religion quite independent of outward forms: God who sees the heart, values all our actions by their motives, and so the outward form cannot in *his* eyes be of the least consequence."

"My dearest child," answered her uncle, "listen to me for a moment, and I will try to prove to you on what dangerous ground you are arguing. It is God's holy will to make the test of all religion, among mankind, to consist in our absolute, and voluntary, obedience to his will. He has promised us the most inestimable benefits upon certain conditions, and *our acceptance* of these conditions is just what people mean when you hear them talking about *faith;* but then he demands from us some palpable and public acknowledgment, that we accept and bind ourselves to his conditions. If this were not the case, men would very soon forget all about religion, and having once set it down as an understood thing that they were to do all that God required of them, would soon plunge themselves into worldly concerns, and forget that such a thing existed as this covenant into which they had entered with God. Before our Lord Jesus Christ came, and while men were yet ignorant of the means by which they were to be saved, and restored to all the happiness they had lost, it was even more necessary than it is now, that the thought of religion, and of their obligation to God, should be kept alive, because, then nothing had ever *occurred* to impress these things on their minds, as our Lord's life and death have done to

us; and so God instituted all that tedious and intricate Jewish law, which we read of in the Old Testament, on purpose that, by constantly having something to do, or some ceremonial to observe, his people might never be allowed to forget the obligations of religion. In our case,—in modern days,—so very heavy a code of rites and ceremonies was not necessary, after the precious gift bequeathed to us by Christ in the *New Testament*, and so—Can any of you tell me, my dear children, what is required of us now instead?"

The children were silent for a minute or two, and then Roderick, the young student, answered modestly, "The observance of the moral code given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, and fulfilling all the duties which he taught and practised."

"That is very wisely and naturally said, my dear boy," returned Mr. Mackenzie, "but it is not exactly the right answer to my question. You know that the morals and duties which Christ taught are so beautiful in themselves, and so very obvious and unanswerable, that men's reason would very soon have been so convinced of their usefulness and their value, that no divine command would have been necessary to enforce them, and if it were, there would be no merit in that obedience which brought such an immediate harvest of good along with it. Men could have

no motive for disobeying God when they reaped such plain and speedy benefits from the opposite course; and besides this, if God had made our acceptance with him to depend merely on the fulfilment of these moral duties, men would have said, 'I have no need to thank God for restoring me to happiness; I have worked for it, earned it; and so it is mine by right.' So on purpose that men may avoid such a terrible error as this, God has made the test of our religion to consist in things which appear to us not only of infinitely less importance, but without any meaning which we can discover at all. He has ordered, for instance, that we prove our belief in the sufficiency of Christ's atonement, by publicly observing the ordinance of the Lord's Supper: And that we declare our conviction of our own helplessness to do good—of our entire dependence on the influence of his Spirit, which must teach us even to believe in Christ, and to observe the ordinances of our religion in sincerity, by receiving the rite of Baptism, and bringing our children to the font to receive it, before they can judge for themselves.

"And now, my Evie,"—and Mr. Mackenzie placed Evelyn upon his knee, and addressed himself to her particularly,—"since God has declared to me that he chooses to accept as the test of my religion, that I fulfil these ordinances which he has appointed, and of which I do not know the

meaning any more than Cain understood why his sacrifice was to be a lamb without blemish,—do you think that if I were to discover some inconvenience attending my observance of these rites in the exact order of God's commandment,—for instance, if I were to find it more agreeable, instead of having you baptized while you were a baby, to let you grow to be a great girl before I did it; or if I did not find it convenient to observe the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, because there was no church near, or for any other foolish reason of my own—don't you think that if I were presumptuous and self-sufficient enough to do all this, that God would do very well and justly to reject me as he did Cain?"

"Oh! dear papa, but you could not be so wicked," said little Evelyn, nestling close to her father, as if she did not like that he should place himself in a comparison with Cain.

"No, not in this particular instance, I hope," answered he, with a smile, "but there are many more cases besides these great ones which I have named, wherein we may offend God, by a self-willed or irregular mode of observing our duties, or by that pride of heart, with which we strive to evade his commands, by saying, 'the form is of no consequence, I may be allowed to do it in my own way.'"

"But it is only very wicked people who try to

evade the commands of God in this way, is it not, papa?" asked Evie, in a timid voice.

"Oh! no, my Evelyn," answered her father, "many good people fall into grievous errors, and argue as Flo' did, though perhaps not quite in such simplicity of heart. However, you and I, my Evie, and all who wish to do with all their heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, what Christ requires of them, will make this the rule of their conduct—that whatever God commands is to be done earnestly and faithfully whether the reason or the results be perceptible to us or not. And depend upon it, Evie, if we try all our actions by asking ourselves this question, 'Am I walking in the humble, submissive, single-hearted spirit of Abel, or in the proud, obstinate, cunning, self-deceiving temper of Cain?' we shall find a great many actions to condemn which would otherwise have escaped our notice. I recommend to you, too, my Evelyn, and to all such little people as you, that you apply this rule also to your obedience to your earthly guardians. Remember that all obedience, to have any value, must be absolute,—unquestioning. No such calculations as these must ever mingle themselves with our obedience, 'Why is *this* required of me?' 'Why would not *that* do as well?' and 'What good end is to be served by this?' and 'What results can possibly

spring from that?' All these speculations, my dearest children, have their source and end in evil; and I firmly believe can never have any existence except in natures tainted by the pride and the arrogance which overspread the heart of Cain. But come, now, this has been such a long lecture, that I am afraid the stars will not have waited for us,"—and Mr. Mackenzie rose, and led the way to the lawn.

It was a most sweet and quiet evening, and it seemed as if the feelings of the little group were softened and hallowed down to the most exact accordance with the soft, breathless calm, that rested on everything out of doors. Evelyn brought her papa's great cloak, and spread it upon the turf, in case the evening dew should already have begun to fall, and upon it the group reclined, to watch the summer stars come gleaming out in the dewy sky, and to continue the pleasant talk of the dining-room, which they did, by many eager and curious questions from Roderick and Kenneth, but especially from Flora, whose mind seemed entirely engrossed by the novel occupations of this day.

Meantime mamma had brought the tea-table close to the French doors of the drawing-room, and Evelyn and Hector were charmed by receiving orders to hand the tea and cakes to the group

outside. It was a sweet Sunday party. The sun gradually sank away, and the soft twilight fell upon the lawn, making the very sound of the children's voices come more sweetly through the mild and dewy air. Star after star came forth in the deep purple sky, and at last the moon rose pure, and bright, and glorious, as if to show them of how radiant and beautiful a nature are the things of heaven. And an hour afterwards, when the bell rang for prayers, half a dozen voices were raised to exclaim "What a pity this day is over!"

"Well, dear Flo', isn't a Sunday at Glenlee anything but wearisome?" said Evie, as they were undressing to go to bed.

"Oh! Evelyn," answered Flo', who roused herself from a profound study to listen to her, "how much I wish the day were to begin again to-morrow!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DOVES.

MEANTIME, Mrs. Buchanan's doves flourished and improved under Evelyn's tender care. The gentle and soft cooing which they made every morning awoke the little girls by day-break, and many a time throughout the day drew Evelyn up stairs, "just to see what they were about." In the cool of the morning she would place them outside the window in the sun, but when mid-day came she never forgot to take them out of the glare, and used most frequently to carry the cage into her favourite haunt, the thorn-tree, where they never failed to show themselves perfectly happy in the soft green shade, and would plume their feathers, and repeat their musical and affectionate "coo-oo-oo," till Evelyn's heart and her eyes danced with joy and sympathy.

At last the lady-dove produced two beautiful little snow-white eggs, and the pride and triumph and happy anticipations of Evelyn were at their height. It was judged best to leave the delicate matron in retirement with her little treasures, so the daily airings in the thorn-tree were intermitted for a while; but that she might have the full benefit of the light and the fresh air, the

gardener was requested every morning to pull a fresh bough of lilac, or mountain-ash, large enough to overshadow the whole cage, and thus Evelyn managed to secure all the advantages of the thorn-tree to her pet, without incurring the risk of moving the cage to such a distance, while an additional handful of canary-seed, or a stalk of maize, was daily added to the customary allowance of hemp and buck-wheat.

One morning, a few days after the appearance of the eggs, and before the novelty and excitement had in any degree worn off, it happened that Evelyn had run upstairs, as usual, just before lesson-hours commenced, to see that the doves were comfortable, and had made a good breakfast, and had plenty of water and sand, before saying good-bye to them till dinner-time. Mrs. Mackenzie was waiting her re-appearance in the back parlour, where the lessons went on, and Flora had already begun to practise, when a hurried hand opened the door, and Evelyn burst into the room with her face swollen and crimsoned with excitement.

"Mother, mother!" exclaimed she, in a choking voice, "it is broken—it is all broken to pieces, and the shell lying scattered about the cage. My beautiful little egg—the egg that was to give me my dove—it is broken to pieces, and I know it was

Hector who did it, by throwing stones. Oh! mamma, mamma, there will be no more eggs this summer, and I shall never be happy again." And in a paroxysm of despair, the little sufferer flung herself upon the carpet, in the very abandonment of her excited feelings.

"My dear Evelyn, compose yourself, I entreat of you," said her mother, in a tone of grave rebuke; "I am quite shocked to see you lose your self-command in this foolish way; get up, my dear child, and tell me a little more distinctly what has happened to distress you."

"What has happened!" repeated Evelyn, in a tone which the excitement of her temper rendered impatient even to her mamma, "the greatest misfortune that could happen to me; one of my dove's eggs is broken, and now I shall go and break the other to keep the poor little solitary dove from pining itself to death, after it is hatched, for want of society. Oh! wicked, cruel Hector; I should not be in the least degree sorry if something terrible were to happen to him for his wickedness. He is a cruel, hard-hearted boy, and does not care anything about inflicting pain, and I hope he may suffer some himself, as a punishment." And for a little while longer she continued to rave on in this passionate manner, till she had run herself fairly out of breath, and then her

mother interposed with a grave, gentle tone of remonstrance.

"When your blind fit of passion shall have subsided, my poor child, you will find that the pain of remembering that you have uttered such words is infinitely greater than the pleasure you have had in giving vent to them. At present, as you seem to have entirely thrown off the restraints of reason, I do not find myself called upon to treat you like a reasonable being, and so I must apply to Flora for her assistance in this matter. Be so good, my love," added she, turning to Flora, "as to walk upstairs for the bird's cage, that I may be able to judge for myself of the injury that has been committed."

Flora obeyed in silence, and Evelyn continued to weep and sob, as if the destruction of the little egg comprehended the heaviest misfortunes of life. When the cage appeared, there were certainly lamentable traces visible of devastation, for the delicate shell was scattered about, and the bottom of the cage appeared strewed with small stones, which told very suspicious things against Hector, and his old-established habit of pelting; while my lady-dove sat as demurely and gravely as possible upon her nest in the corner, looking as though she considered herself very ill used, but quite secure of the sympathy and support of the lookers-on.

"Was the cage put out before the boys set off to school?" asked Mrs. Mackenzie, after contemplating the scene of violence for a few moments without speaking.

"Yes, yes, it was put out as usual," said Evelyn, in a voice of despair, "and I walked to the gate with Hector, and I saw him chucking the very same stones about, exactly like those in the cage; and I dare say he had chucked some at the birds as he passed, and I think he was most wicked and hard-hearted, and I should be quite glad if he were whipt for it;" and another fresh burst of distress followed the renewed contemplation of her injuries.

"I did not suppose that I was ever to hear my Evelyn express a desire for revenge," said Mrs. Mackenzie; "but there is no limit, I perceive, to the deforming influence of passion. Hector shall certainly be punished for originating this evil; though if punishments are to be strictly administered to all who have been guilty of violence, I suspect that more will be likely to suffer than Hector."

The gentle and yet severe reproofs of her mother, though in more reasonable moments they would have overwhelmed Evelyn with grief and remorse, seemed at present to pass before her unregarded: so entirely were her powers of ob-

servation obscured and led away by the recent occurrence, that she seemed to lose every other feeling but those of indignation and sorrow, which it had awakened.

"I cannot believe that Hector would throw stones into the cage on purpose," said Mrs. Mackenzie, after a few moments' consideration, "and the circumstance of the cage being placed so near the window is apparently a sufficient reason why they could not have been thrown accidentally. Have you seen any of Hugh's boys about this morning, Margery?" and she turned to nurse, who had followed the cage in its unusual journey to the parlour.

"Oh! yes, ma'am," replied Margery, "they have been in the onion and carrot beds all the morning, and before breakfast they were carrying water, to water the young cabbages, backwards and forwards, under my windows, for more than an hour, but they are very quiet, decent boys, ma'am, I do not think it could have been them."

"Perhaps not, Margery," answered her lady, "but we must not fix the matter upon Hector either, without some further proof."

"I am certain it was Hector; I saw him with the very same stones this morning," exclaimed Evelyn again, "the same little pieces of blue slate exactly, and he was throwing them about to

show how correctly he could hit a mark. I am quite certain it was Hector, nothing will ever make me believe otherwise."

"Hector is very mischievous, and does many things without at all considering the consequences they may produce; but I do not often find him guilty of so deliberate a piece of cruelty as this," said Mrs. Mackenzie, addressing herself to Flora; "there are two considerations which must have weighed with him to prevent it—his own interest in the doves, and his regard for Evelyn. I am not going to condemn him, nor to subject him to punishment, without further proof."

"I don't think it was Hector, aunt," said Flora, in reply, "he has always shown so much regard to the doves, and when he asked leave to come and see them since the eggs came, he has always been so quiet, and peeped into the cage so carefully, that I do not believe he would take an aim at the cage with a stone."

"We shall be able to find out by dinner-time, at all events," was the reply. "Meantime, Margery, carry you the cage back again to its pl and take care that the same accident do occur again. I must not have the rupted any longer; we ca this mischief, and th over it the better."

It was quite in vain, however, that Evelyn's mamma expected her to apply her mind to anything like study throughout this unlucky morning. Not one line could she be made either to acquire or to understand, and every now and then Flora's methodical proceedings were interrupted by a deep sob, as if to prove how completely the destruction of the dove's egg retained its ascendancy in the mind of Evelyn.

At last came the hour of dinner; the boys returned; the business of dressing was finished, and crest-fallen and unhappy Evelyn betook herself to the drawing-room, at her mamma's request, that she might be present at the judicial examination that was about to be passed on Hector. To her extreme surprise, however, she found on entering that the grave offence against the doves had been superseded by a still heavier, or, at least, more generally acknowledged transgression. Two large panes of a hot-bed had been broken, and the first thing Evelyn heard, when she entered the room, was her papa's voice, in grave remonstrance with Hector.

"Now, my dear boy, do not forfeit the character which you have so long enjoyed for your love and observance of truth. Remember, Hector, that the loss of ten hot-beds will not grieve me half so much as the suspicion of a falsehood on your part,

and certainly the presumption against you is very strong at this moment. Here are the same description of stones which you are proved to have been flinging all about the lawn and garden this morning. I can identify them myself, since one came with such force against my own window, that I was obliged to rise and caution you to be a little less careless. You acknowledge having been all round the garden before going to school, and nothing could be more likely than that the same carelessness by which the stones so nearly came through the glass in my room should have sent them both into the hot-bed and the bird's cage. I do not expect you to confess having done it, because it is just possible that you may be yourself unconscious of the extent of the mischief you committed; but I do not like to hear you declare in that hasty and determined tone, that you are guiltless of both. I would much rather hear that you might have done all the mischief, without intending it."

"I could not have thrown the stones up to the window without intending it, uncle," said Hector, stoutly, "and I know that I did not, because I never threw any at all, so long as I was at the back of the house; I have the most distinct recollection of that."

"My dear Hector, you know, as well as I do,

that is not the truth," said Mr. Mackenzie, very gravely, " my window is at the back of the house, and you surely have not forgotten having thrown a stone, larger than any of these I have brought in from the hot-bed, almost quite through my window. If you tell me, now, that you have a distinct recollection of not aiming at the dove's cage, I shall think it a very suspicious circumstance."

Hector looked very uncomfortable and vexed for a few minutes, and did not make any answer. Both the elder boys were desired to say whether Hector had been throwing the stones about in their presence, and whether they had seen him do it in front of the house, or behind it. Roderick could not remember the circumstance at all, but Kenneth recollected seeing the young culprit stone a cat which was sitting near the hot-beds, and chase it till it made its way over the wall.

This was very like presumptive evidence, and Mr. Mackenzie looked graver and graver. " And you, Evelyn," said he, turning to the disconsolate little mourner, " I saw you walking down the avenue with Hector, on his way to school. What were you doing, or talking about, then?"

Evelyn began sobbing again immediately, and was some time before she could command voice enough to reply. " Indeed, papa, I am sure it was Hector, for we were talking of people being good marks-

men; and he told me of a gentleman, who had given an old woman half a guinea to allow him to shoot at one of her pigeons with a rifle, promising not to kill it, and so he took off the pigeon's right foot with his bullet; and Hector said, he could have made as good a hit with a stone; and I am sure it must have been my doves he was thinking of."

It seemed as though the general attention had been divided between concern for Hector's disgrace, and surprise at the unusual vindictiveness of Evelyn. She, whose gentle and forgiving disposition was by this time a proverb in the house, and who at all times would prefer enduring any amount of hardship in her own person, to being the cause of punishment or even of reproof to any one else, seemed suddenly inspired, by the injuries offered to her pets, with the bitterest feelings of enmity and revenge. The examination of Hector, however, led to no further results as regarded his crimination. No one had seen him throw the stones, consequently no one had a right to fix the guilt of the affair directly upon him; but a strong prejudice remained against him during the rest of the day, and the general hilarity was effectually broken up throughout the evening. Evelyn could not recover herself. Hector felt himself an object of distrust and suspicion; and

instead of the accustomed social and merry amusement, the evening wore heavily away; each of the children being left to seek occupation for his or herself in solitary independence.

When Flora and Evelyn were in bed, Mrs. Mackenzie came as usual to pay them her last visit for the night; and after kissing Flora, and exchanging a few words of kindness and gaiety with her, she walked over and sat down by the side of Evelyn. "Have you kissed Hector to night, my Evelyn?" asked she, bending down to her and speaking in a very low tone.

"No, mamma," was the reply.

"What is the reason you have not?" continued Mrs. Mackenzie. "Is it because you consider him too naughty to deserve your kindness, or because you cannot forgive the injury he has done to yourself?"

Evelyn paused for a moment, and then replied, "I am not quite sure which it is, mamma."

"Come, then, and let us try to find out," said her mother. "Do you remember, Evelyn, that day last week, when Mr. Stewart sent Hector home in such disgrace because none of his lessons were prepared; did you go to bed without kissing him then?"

"No, indeed, mamma," answered Evelyn; "I was more than usually kind to Hector that night, and kept his bread and milk warm for him all the

time he was so busy; indeed, I did not neglect to kiss him that night."

"Well, a few days ago, when old Hugh came in with a complaint from the gardener, that the whole of the new asparagus-bed was trampled over with the marks of Mr. Hector's feet, and the fresh grafts on the old pear-tree had been destroyed by the same ruthless influence, papa thought it proper to punish Hector very severely that night, I remember; did you, Evelyn, also think it your duty, to allow Hector to go to bed without saying good night to him?"

"No, mamma, not at all," answered Evelyn, eagerly; "I was so sorry for him that night, that when he was ordered to sit in his room all the evening, I remained with him, though papa began to read *The Talisman;* and I was so anxious to hear about Richard and Saladin."

"Well, Evelyn, don't you think, then," said her mamma, in a very grave and gentle tone—"don't you think, that since Hector's faults do not exercise any effect upon you, in the way of estranging or alienating you from him, when they do not affect yourself, and when the contrary happens as soon as you discover that you are yourself the sufferer by their results—don't you think it very likely that some feeling which it is not safe to indulge—some feeling quite apart from the honest

and conscientious disapproval of his fault—may be the real ground of your estrangement?"

Mrs. Mackenzie waited a long time for Evelyn's reply, and at last she said timidly, "But I think, mamma, that the throwing stones into the dove's cage was a much more naughty fault, than either neglecting his lessons or trampling the asparagus-bed."

"Well, my dear, I agree with you that it was so," replied her mother; "let us take another error of Hector's, then, to judge by. Do you remember that day, when your papa's horse, Rover, had sprained his foot, and we were all so sorry for him? Do you recollect when the groom took him out to exercise, and was walking him up and down on the grass, and Hector came and managed to persuade Angus to let him have the guidance of him, promising not to take him off the soft green path; and then, when the groom's back was fairly turned, he galloped him up and down the gravel, till poor Rover's sprained foot was worse than ever? I do not think the breaking of the egg was a worse fault than that, do you?"

"No, mamma," answered Evelyn.

"And yet I do not think this made you dislike Hector, or continue at enmity with him, did it?"

"No, mamma."

"Then it is not Hector's inhumanity that has

estranged you from him, Evelyn; it is his injury to yourself, which has made the sun go down upon your wrath, and sent you to bed without saying good night to him. Did you say your prayers to-night, Evelyn?"

"Yes, mamma, of course."

"And when you repeated that petition, 'Forgive us our trespasses *as we forgive those who trespass against us*,' did you not remember, that if that prayer were answered, and God were to treat your offences in the same way in which you had treated this one of Hector's, you would be a most wretched and miserable child?"

Evelyn made no reply.

"Would it not frighten you very much, if you thought God ever regarded you in the same light in which you now look upon Hector?"

"Yes, mamma," answered Evelyn, in a very low and solemn tone of voice, "oh yes!"

"And do you think you have never been guilty of any sin against God so grievous as that which Hector has committed against you?"

Evelyn burst into tears, and wept very bitterly, as she replied, "Oh yes! yes, dear mamma, many a time."

"Don't you think, my Evelyn," continued Mrs. Mackenzie, as she bent down, and took the weeping child in her arms, "that the very way in

which you have borne the little trial that God sent you this morning was enough to call down his displeasure against you? The violence of your regret, and the earnestness with which you strove to fix the blame on Hector, were much more the acts of a rebellious and headstrong child than of a meek and gentle little Christian. Don't you think it a very small matter, my Evelyn, that we who receive such perpetual proofs of love and favour from God,—we to whom He is as the kindest and the tenderest of parents, giving us life and health and reason, and the bread we eat and the clothes we wear, and the pleasant sunshine in which we rejoice, and the friends we love; and, more than all the rest, the life of his dear Son to be our model and our atonement,—don't you think it is a very small matter, that we should bear a little, tiny trial now and then, for the sake of this dear and bounteous Friend? Do you not rather think we ought to look on it as a privilege, to be able to prove our gratitude and our submission to Him by taking the trials He sends us as so many opportunities of exercising the meekness and gentleness which he likes best to discover in his children?"

"Yes, dear mamma," answered little Evelyn, sobbing, "I think I have been very wicked, but indeed, indeed, it was very hard to part with my egg."

"I believe it was, my dear child," returned her mother, "and a certain degree of suffering in consequence was both natural and allowable; but you know, Evelyn, that when people's feelings are quite disproportioned to the causes that draw them forth, then they cease to excite any sympathy, and are either highly blameable or highly ridiculous. I am afraid I am compelled to place my Evelyn's in the former class."

"But I was thinking how cruel it was to take deliberate aim against the doves, dear mamma; and how much hurt they might have been," persisted Evelyn.

"Very true, Evelyn," answered her mamma, "and if Hector did take deliberate aim at the doves, no excuse can be made for him. But I think there are some ways in which to interpret this piece of mischief that are not quite so painful to one's feelings as this—For instance, Hector might have thrown his stones at the cage, without reflecting on the possibility of injury to the doves, and just as a careless boy will do, without any object at all, except curiosity to see whether he could hit his mark. I don't think that in general Hector shows any desire to grieve or disoblige you, Evelyn."

"Oh! no, no, mamma," said Evelyn; "never, never at all; and indeed he has always been very kind even to the doves till now."

"Well, Evelyn, I think both these considerations deserve to be weighed a little. Hector seems very sorry for the accident, and though he has now come the length of saying that his pebbles *might* have done the mischief, yet he is very resentful at any accusation of having taken an aim on purpose. Would it not be very painful to you, Evelyn, if I were to suspect you of any grave fault, and persist in my suspicions, even after you assured me, with all the earnestness possible, that you were innocent?"

"Yes, mamma, very painful indeed."

"Yet all this pain we have inflicted on Hector."

"How very wicked, how very unfeeling, I have been, mamma!" exclaimed little Evelyn, and the tears began to flow afresh. "Do you think I could go still, mamma, and bid good night to Hector, and ask him to forgive me, and tell him that I do not believe it was he who broke the egg?"

"No, my dear," answered her mamma, "I would rather that you waited till the morning, and then probably we may be able to throw a little light upon the present obscurity of the story. But I am very glad, my Evelyn, for your own sake, that you have discovered the evil of your own feelings towards Hector; and now I shall bid you good night far more happily than I ever could have done, so long as those rancorous and bitter feel-

ings were at work within your breast. To-morrow we shall all exert ourselves to find out the truth, and then the bad tempers of this day must be forgotten, or remembered only as a warning for the future."

And Evelyn's mamma bent over the little girl, and kissed her very tenderly, and Evelyn lay for a long time in the dark, ruminating over the errors of which her kind mamma had made her sensible, and longing for the morrow, when they might be repaired.

Next morning Evelyn was awake by day-dawn, and when the good Margery had finished the task of dressing her, she could scarcely command her impatience so far as to wait till Flora awoke of her own accord, so eager was she to communicate her new ideas to her cousin, and to receive the benefit of Flora's sagacity, in her endeavours to develop them.

At last Flora opened her eyes, and no sooner did Evelyn perceive the first glimmering of them through the long black lashes, than she commenced her business.

"Please make haste, Flo', I have been wearying so for you to awake; I think I know something that may perhaps help us to discover who threw the stones, but of course I cannot find out anything all by myself—please do not be long of dressing, dear Flo'."

"What is it, Evie?—has anything happened?—what has made you so early?" asked Flora, in a drowsy voice: it was quite evident that her own ideas were as yet too indistinct to admit of her recognizing or adopting those advanced by any one else.

"Nothing has happened yet," answered Evelyn, too much engrossed by her own thoughts to be at all alive to the great fun which, at any other time, would have been afforded to her by Flora's sleepiness; "but when you are awake, and come with me into the garden to explore, then I hope something will happen to convince us that it was not Hector who threw the stones after all."

After a little more stretching and yawning, Flora jumped out of bed, and in a very short time, with the active assistance of Evelyn and Margery, her toilette was completed, and both the little girls proceeded down stairs in the act of tying their bonnets.

"And now for the new idea, Evie; let's have it quick, for I assure you I am to the full as much interested in the proof of Hector's innocence as you are," said Flora, as they stept upon the green. "Indeed I did not expect last night that I was to derive anything from your assistance in trying to prove it. I am glad to see you have swept away your pet against him in your dreams last night."

"Oh! dear, Flo', do not talk of it," said Evie, blushing, and speaking in a tone of distress. "I was so wicked yesterday, that nothing can reconcile me to myself, or to Hector, except my being of some use, in some way, in proving that he was not to blame."

"Well, I agree with you, that would be a very nice way of making your peace with him," answered Flora; "but how to set about it, dear Evie?"

"Well, I will tell you my new idea now," replied Evie; "and I hope, dear Flo', you will be able to make some use of it. I was thinking, over and over, as I lay awake in my bed last night, who had been in the garden yesterday, and, for a long long time, I could not remember anybody except Hector and the two little gardeners; but I now recollect of seeing two workmen with tall ladders, that reached to the very top of the house, and they looked as if they were putting new slates upon the roof, and they threw the old ones down among the flowers in the border. Do you think, Flo', that some of these stones might have fallen into my cage by accident?"

Flora pondered this question a long time in her mind before she replied to it, and at last she said,—

"Nothing could appear more likely than this, dearest Evie, and it seems so fair and tempting an

explanation of all our difficulties, that I feel quite sorry to give it up, but I am afraid it won't do. Don't you remember that the workmen were at work in front of the house, and that their little bits of stone came all tumbling down past the drawing-room windows? whereas our window and Margery's window, where the cage is always put, are behind the house, and so out of the workmen's way altogether."

Evelyn looked considerably disappointed by this statement, but she was not yet ready to relinquish her new idea.

"At all events, Flo', these are precisely the same stones, the same *kind* of stones, I mean, that were found in the cage; and see, they are scattered all over the border. Come, and let us go round to the back, and try whether we can find any there."

This proposal was immediately acted upon, and the two proceeded to the back lawn without interrupting their conversation.

"It is not at all impossible," said Flora, "that some of those workmen might have been mischievous enough to take aim at the doves."

Evelyn remembered that she had already entertained suspicions without adequate foundation, and so she allowed this surmise of Flora's to pass unnoticed; and when they had gained the

place of their destination, began peering about among the grass and the flowers, to see whether any traces of the rubbish left by the workmen had made its way to the back of the house. They both continued their search for awhile in vain, but at last Flora went close to the wall, and pressed aside the luxuriant mignionette which grew all round it:

"Oh! here, here, Evelyn, here are whole quantities of the same stones; I have no doubt but the workmen have been on this side also."

"Oh! look, Flo'," exclaimed Evelyn, interrupting her, "see, there is a little peep of the ladder appearing from the other side of the roof. I have no doubt the men flung their pieces of slate and mortar over to this side: come over here, dear Flo', and you may see the ladder if you like —see, it is just peeping up above the sharp part of the roof."

It was very well for Flora that she answered her cousin's invitation immediately, for she had scarcely gained Evelyn's side, and turned round to make her observations, when a man's head and shoulders appeared above the ledge upon which the ladder was resting, and in one moment afterwards a shower of broken slates and crumbling mortar came down on the very spot she had so lately occupied.

"Margery, Margery," cried Evelyn, at the very top of her voice, and almost breathless with alarm, "do not put out the doves this morning, on any account whatever." And having secured Margery's acquiescence over the window, she turned round to join Flora's gambols of delight and triumph at the entire exculpation of Hector.

"And now for the hot-bed," said Flora, when their first burst of satisfaction was over; "I don't believe Hector broke the hot-bed either, now, but I am afraid the workmen could not have anything to do with that, it lies so far away from their operations, quite in the middle of the garden, you know."

"Well, let us go round and see, at all events," said little Evie; "there is nothing like exploring when one wants to make a discovery." And accordingly off they tripped to examine the hot-bed and its vicinity.

They found Mr. Mackenzie already in the garden, and Flo' very wisely and generously held her tongue, and allowed Evelyn the pleasure and triumph of announcing the proofs of Hector's innocence, only putting in her own word to assure her uncle that it was entirely owing to Evelyn's new idea that the discovery had been made at all.

"And now we are come to explore the hot-beds, uncle," continued she, "for we are quite

determined to find out that Hector is not to blame for that neither."

"Well, come, and take me into your counsels," answered Mr. Mackenzie, "for I am equally interested in the issue, and I promise to be very useful and to do whatever you bid me. But stay, suppose I were to give you another new idea to work upon—one which occurred to me just a minute before you appeared—surely so much wisdom cannot be exercised in vain."

The little girls called eagerly to be enlightened, and Mr. Mackenzie began his directions:—

"Do you see that little tiny heap of rubbish, no bigger than a handful, that lies just on the edge of the walk; see, there is another just like it almost in the middle of the bed; and if you look a little way farther, you will see a third within a few inches of that glass frame. Come, and let us all explore, and try whether we can find any more little heaps."

He took one of the girls in each hand, and they all proceeded very slowly and carefully down the walk, in search of the little heaps. At the end of every few paces they encountered one, sometimes larger, sometimes smaller, but all of the same sort of rubbish—old slates and mortar; and this continued till they had followed the track fairly out of one of the gates, and on to a little mound of loose

stones, where there were great heaps, exactly resembling the small ones.

The little girls did not exactly comprehend what was to be gathered from this circumstance, and so Mr. Mackenzie begged them to resume their walk with him, that they might trace the little heaps back again, to find out where they came from on the other side.

Accordingly, another exploring walk enabled them to trace the rubbish all the way to the edge of the lawn, and they had no sooner arrived there than Flora clapped her hands with joy, and pointed to a man, who was advancing from the foot of the ladder, with a hod on his shoulder, loaded with the rubbish with which they had all become so familiar.

"I have found it all out," exclaimed she, in a tone of infinite glee, "this is the culprit—he is to blame both for the dove's egg and the hot-bed; for the first, by allowing the stones to roll over the roof, and down before the windows; and for the second, by carrying his hod so clumsily and so close to the glass frames, that the stones fell from it by the way, as we have seen all along to the very edge of the glass."

A happier consummation could not be desired by any but the workman, who received a sharp remonstrance on his awkwardness; and then the

party returned to the house, to congratulate Hector.

"How many of the Cardinal Virtues did you violate yesterday, Evie?" asked her mamma, at breakfast.

"Every one of them, mamma," answered Evelyn, "but justice and temperance most, I think; and if the solitary little dove should live and be reared, dear mamma, I think it will always be a sort of remembrance to me to be kind and unsuspicious for the future."

Perhaps, my dear little readers, you would like to hear that the little dove not only lived, but lived the very gayest, and prettiest, and happiest of pets. It did not seem to desire any other mate than Evelyn; it would often fly into her bosom, and ruffle its soft, pretty head against her cheek; and it would perch upon her finger, and hold long conversations in its pretty cooing language with its happy mistress; and if Evelyn held it up before the looking-glass, it would bow and chatter and make its compliments to the little dove it found there in such a manner as made all the children laugh heartily.

It had a beautiful cage from good Mrs. Buchanan, according to her promise, but it was so very tame that it used to occupy its cage only as a sleeping apartment, and might be found fluttering about Evelyn almost all day long.

One day Flora provided a delightful surprise for her cousin, by having a tiny collar of the most delicate gold made for the bird, bearing its mistress' name, and a little fairy chain attached to it, which was fastened also to one foot, and though scarcely thicker than a silk thread, was yet strong enough to prevent the precious little favourite from using its wings too freely, and leaving its kind friends some day in a fit of caprice. There never was a pet so prized, nor so worthy of estimation. Evelyn has often been heard to declare, that she does not think she could have loved them so much if there had been a pair.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MINOR MORALITIES.

"PRAY, uncle," said Flora, one evening when the rain fell very heavily, and the little party were gathered round the table in the drawing-room, after all the lessons were over for the night, "do you think that a person, who possesses all the Cardinal Virtues, is quite certain to be a fine character?"

"A *great* character unquestionably, Flora."

"Well, uncle, of course," pursued Flora, evidently full of an idea of her own; "but I mean, do you consider that the possession of those splendid virtues is sure to make people admired, and loved, and imitated, without anything else at all?"

"Why yes, don't you think that a garden full of large magnolias, and tulip trees, and rich acacias, and tall fuchsias, is sure to be a fine garden without anything else at all?"

"No, uncle; now that is precisely what I mean," answered Flora, with a very satisfied look: "*I* could not love such a garden at all, unless there were pinks, and carnations, and roses, and geraniums, and beautiful things quite close, and

low down, that I could see and admire without straining my neck to *look up* for them."

"In short, Flo'," interrupted Kenneth, "you consider the cardinal virtues far too ponderous machines to put in competition with the tuft of swandown and the golden tissue."

"No, no, I think I can tell exactly what Flora means," said Roderick, the grave student of divinity, closing up his book to take part in the discussion; "I was thinking over the very same subject myself only the other day, and I will read you a passage about it which struck me:" he lifted a book that lay near him, and read aloud.

"'If you send a man forth into the world with his head ever so full of knowledge, and his heart ever so richly stored with principles, yet lacking an easy port and a graceful address, you will find him shortly fallen into obscurity, as a book, which, containing matter the most precious, has been offered to the world under a title that conveys ideas of meanness or absurdity.'"

"Exactly, Roderick, that is just what I mean," exclaimed Flora, eagerly; "and I will tell you what first made me think of it, uncle: do you know, that I think young Mr. Davidson's is a title-page which implies ideas of meanness and absurdity, for though you said yesterday, that you scarcely could name a virtue of which you

did not think him possessed, yet I observed that he took off his spurs in the drawing-room, and laid them down on aunt's work-table, and that he sat down to dinner with his face and hands unwashed; and then he made such a noise when he was eating his soup, that indeed, indeed, all you had told me about his virtues was not enough to banish the ideas of absurdity."

Mr. Mackenzie laughed good naturedly at Flora's ladylike strictures on Mr. Davidson.

"I am willing to concede to you and Lord Chesterfield, whom I am not sorry to perceive that Roderick begins to glance over," said he, "that a good man is not always a gentleman; and that, even where the cardinal virtues are in active operation, there is a series of minor moralities highly desirable to fill up the picture, and prevent a man from such 'treason against virtue,' as the being good and disagreeable at the same time."

"Minor moralities, papa!" exclaimed little Evelyn, "Oh! what nice things, I hope too there is a list of them, that I may remember what they are."

"I am sorry to say, Evie, they are things somewhat too subtle to be reduced to a list," answered her papa; "indeed, I am not sure that they can all rank even under the great head of polite-

ness, unless it be that politeness which a great man has defined 'magnanimity in trifles.'"

"I do not quite agree with his description, papa, do you?" said Kenneth; "I do not think it magnanimity to be polite; I think most men would be polite if they could, but it is the want of knowing how which prevents them."

"Very rarely so, my dear boy," returned his father; "few people can have the excuse of not knowing how, if they give the matter a moment's consideration; the application of the grand Christian motto, 'Do to all men as you would that they should do unto you,' is very generally sufficient to secure a polite deportment."

"Well, uncle, I don't agree with you," said Flora, with a very wise look; "for instance, I believe Mr. Davidson would have had no objection at all to aunt putting her spurs upon his work-table, so the Christian maxim would have been of no manner of use to him."

"True, Flora," returned her uncle, with a smile; "but as poor Mr. Davidson was educated in the lowest rank of life, it is most probable that he was never taught the more minute details of politeness. It is only where such matters are the every day routine of life, that a breach of them deserves rebuke."

"But do you think, uncle, that in such a case

the Minor Moralities are at all likely to be forgotten?" asked Flora.

"Occasionally, I am afraid," rejoined Mr. Mackenzie, smiling; "for instance, I yesterday saw a young lady of taste and education box her brother's ears, because he placed a wet shoe upon the skirt of her white gown; and I have not unfrequently been called upon to reprove a laugh which was unmusically loud, and a step that was ungracefully high, in the same elegant quarter: these, you know, my Flora, are no errors of education. And then, on the other hand, I have to find fault with a mathematical and classical scholar in this house, because he persists in carrying his EUCLID into the drawing-room, and when one addresses a word to him, as of course, in a public apartment, every one feels inclined to do, he replies either with a piteous entreaty to be left in peace, or by a stupid stare which leaves you in a pleasant conviction, that he is at the moment in total unconsciousness that such a being as yourself exists."

"And I, papa," said little Evie, with a merry smile, settling herself between her papa's knees, "you know I break through the Minor Moralities oftener than anybody."

"Oh yes! and poor unfortunate I, who have not only to supply the remedy, but to bear the con-

sequence of all your want of politeness,—I am put to the blush, Mistress Evie, because you choose to hang your head and look foolish when any one asks you to play the 'Blue Bells of Scotland,' or to show them your new sampler, or even to say 'How do you do?' in Gaelic; indeed, Miss Evelyn, you are as great a violator of the Minor Moralities as your neighbours: and as for Hector, there is no end to the outrages he offers to them; from the fact of personating a stable boy, downwards. Kenneth, I must confess, studies the elegancies of life more than any of you, and he occasionally forgets himself, notwithstanding."

"Don't you think, uncle," said Roderick, after a thoughtful pause; "don't you think that there have been very few great men distinguished for elegance of manners?"

"No, Roderick," returned his uncle; "on the contrary, I think that only men of very distinguished merit indeed have ever surmounted the obstacle which uncouth manners uniformly place in the way of eminence. And in my opinion the reasons for this are perfectly apparent. An act of politeness is rewarded by the good-will which it never fails to secure from others; while great talents or acquirements, or even great achievements, are disregarded by half the world, simply because their effects are so much more

general—so much less sensibly felt—so much less likely to draw upon the gratitude of individuals."

"Well but, uncle, in that case I think the gratitude is only so much the less valuable," said Roderick, continuing his tone of remonstrance. "I should think it a very silly sort of reputation which was gained by mere acts of politeness; so very little *real* good can ever be done by them."

"I beg your pardon, my dear boy," answered his uncle; "much more of the comfort of life depends upon the good breeding of those with whom we associate, and is destroyed by the want of it, than you imagine. I do not hesitate to declare that I consider a person who is continually wounding the taste, or disturbing the peace, of those around him by a rude defiance of the refinements of life, be they ever so trifling in themselves, to be answerable for a larger amount of suffering to his fellow creatures, than another who may be guilty of some flagrant moral injury to one. In the latter case, the pain inflicted may be more difficult to endure than any mere annoyance such as I would describe; but in the former, it is inflicted on so many people at once, that the degrees suffered by each of them, when added up, will very soon outbalance the single person's

sufferings,—for a rude or ill-mannered man cannot enter any society where he does not wound a greater or less number by his coarseness."

"Oh, but, uncle, I do not mean acts, you know, such as are the effect of good nature, or an absence of selfishness," pursued Roderick; "I do not mean that kind of politeness which makes us think of the *comforts* of another before our own—I think that is a sort of politeness which we ought to consider a duty: I only mean the mere little polish of manner which people that go a great deal about the world, and have nothing else to think of, are usually distinguished by; and which you very seldom see a great scholar, or a person engaged by more solid pursuits, ever take the trouble of acquiring."

"You are entirely mistaken, my dear Roderick," returned his uncle; "I assure you that those very graces of manner which you seem to consider beneath the notice of a great scholar, are productive of nearly as much comfort to society as the higher kind of politeness which you describe, and which ought not to be called politeness at all, but *benevolence*. That agreeable suavity of address of which you take such light account, is a production from exactly the same cause. Both tend to make others happier or more at ease, by convincing them that you are interested in their well-

being; and both are rewarded by the good-will and the good opinion of those who profit by them."

"Yes, uncle, I know," said Roderick, blushing, and hesitating as if at a loss how to express his own ideas; "but I do not make you quite understand me yet. I do not mean to allude to any kind of politeness which has anything to do with our behaviour to *others*, I mean just the little things that make *ourselves* look graceful, and fashionable, and so on; at table, for instance,—or —or,—among *ladies*, you know."

Poor Roderick was often laughed at, at home, for the extreme shyness which prevented the exercise of his gallantry, and this allusion to the point where he was himself conscious of failure, seemed to cost him a violent effort of courage. It was followed, of course, by a titter from Kenneth, who rarely allowed an opportunity for quizzing to escape him, but Mr. Mackenzie did not encourage the attempt by the least appearance of participating in it.

"I know exactly what you mean, my dear boy," answered he; "but if you will take the trouble of examining, you will find that there are very few occasions indeed—when it is possible to practise politeness—which do not in some way or other involve the convenience, or the comfort, or at least the *complacency*, of others. At table this

is peculiarly the case. Of course I do not mean to allude to such atrocities as Flora has contrived to fix upon poor Mr. Davidson: a man who fails to pay the most punctilious attention to the most minute details of good manners, in his own personal deportment at table, will very speedily reap his reward in the disgust with which he cannot fail to inspire his neighbours. But on the less personal matters of good breeding—the attention to the wants of others at table, for instance—there is much more to be said. A shy man will not take any trouble about attending to his neighbours, not because he feels no interest about their comfort, but purely because he cannot summon up courage to make the effort; and, on the other hand, the person he neglects will very probably suffer no inconvenience from his want of gallantry, since the duties of the servants are sufficient to supply its place. But then, my dear boy, that very person, more especially if it happen to be a lady, will suffer quite as much annoyance from the *sense* of your inattention, from the conviction that you do not think it worth while to attend to her, as if she had really borne all the inconvenience which the servants obviated. For example, I remarked the other day, when Lady Ruthven came to call upon your aunt, and was stepping into her carriage to return home, you and Kenneth

happened to be returning from school, and I was observing you from the library windows. I remarked that when her ladyship approached the carriage, after having shaken hands and addressed some very good-humoured words to you, you would have allowed her to step in quite unassisted, or with at most the arm of the footman, had not Kenneth, who had lingered a few steps behind, hastened up at the moment and performed the office, cap in hand, without even making his respects till the lady was fairly seated. Now I am quite certain that you would be as unwilling to allow Lady Ruthven, or any one else, to suffer a moment's inconvenience as Kenneth; and would put yourself out of the way quite as much to afford her any real assistance. But the opportunity of rendering real services to our fellow-creatures occurs so seldom, that we should almost never find an occasion of giving pleasure at all, if we were not to seize trifling opportunities such as this. I have no doubt that the feeling on Lady Ruthven's mind was one of kindly interest and good-will toward Kenneth, while of you she thought only as of an awkward school-boy, who possessed no claim whatever to her notice, and who set no value on the power to establish one. I consider it a great want of policy, dear Roderick, to undervalue *any* means by which we can promote the

comfort of our neighbours, and secure their goodwill towards ourselves."

Roderick laughed uneasily, and with the air of one who is not quite convinced, or at least hesitates to declare himself so.

"You have much higher notions of the value of politeness than I have, uncle, I perceive," answered he at last. "Indeed I have always been accustomed to attach some idea of littleness to a person who made such things much of a study, and to look with perhaps a little contempt on people who practised them very much; as if, somehow or other, a man who gave a great deal of attention to such small matters, could not have much to bestow on things of greater consequence."

"I entreat you to banish that idea, my dear Roderick," said his uncle; "I assure you that, so far from its being a correct one, I have almost uniformly observed the exact contrary. None but mean, or selfish, or low-toned minds, ever profess to hold the obligations of politeness at defiance; and its very choicest instances are the fruits of the noblest and the greatest minds, certainly of those most capable of commanding esteem and affection. In short, my boy, the minor moralities and the cardinal virtues blend into each other by such imperceptible

shades, that when you come to examine them closely, you will find it by no means an easy matter to say where the greater qualities are ended, and the smaller begun."

"But, uncle, I cannot believe that Mr. Davidson, with all his goodness, was not guilty of violating a minor morality, when he laid his spurs upon aunt's work-table," interposed Flora; "and yet I know that he would not violate a cardinal virtue for the world. But then, you know, if there had been a speck of mud upon the spurs, or if they had scratched the *papier mâché*, I am sure that aunt must have suffered inconvenience; so you see the cardinal virtues and the minor moralities are quite different things, and the one may be broken through quite well without doing injury to the other."

Mr. Mackenzie could not help smiling at Flora's persevering application of her own experience.

"Well, Flo'," answered he; "I admit, that in Roderick, or Kenneth, or me, such a delinquency as Mr. Davidson's would have been quite inexcusable, because there are some of the moralities —and those of which you have convicted him, belong to the number—which are, as I said before, the mere fruits of education. And we could scarcely expect Mr. Davidson to know by intui-

tion how flagrant an offence it is to lay his spurs on a lady's work-table, or to eat his soup audibly; so that he may be said to have violated a minor morality unconsciously."

"*Some* of them only taught by education, uncle!" said Roderick, in a thoughtful voice; "then, how do you consider the others to be taught?"

"Some of them—those of a very high and beautiful character—are the spontaneous produce of a finely toned and noble nature," answered his uncle; "while others spring, as I have said, from an honest and cordial observance of the command to 'do unto all men as ye would that they should do unto you.'"

"Oh! well, I am sure Mr. Davidson did not violate one of the last," said Flora; "for I dare say he would not have had the least objection, that we should all have eaten our soup in the same way that he did."

"And I am sure *I* did not violate one of the last, when I neglected to hand Lady Ruthven to her carriage," said Roderick, laughing; "for I should not mind whether any one handed me to mine or not."

"I suspect you are not quite so certain of that point as you yourself imagine, my dear Roderick," returned his uncle, smiling. "The instance of handing to the carriage is hardly one in point, because gentlemen are neither supposed to receive

such assistance, nor to stand in need of it. But, suppose some trifling act of politeness—the very stopping of Lady Ruthven, for example, on her way, to notice and shake hands with you,—suppose she had withheld that trifling act of good-breeding, as she might very easily have done without the smallest forfeiture of the ordinary rules of civility; since she scarcely knows you as yet, and you were not directly in her way,—well, suppose she had passed you bye, without exchanging a word of good-nature or kindness, would you have been *quite* as well pleased,—would you have been as entirely free from mortification, or the little tiny sting of wounded vanity, as she left you by her good-natured and well-bred notice?"

Roderick coloured without answering, and his uncle added: "And yet I uphold, that her neglect would not have amounted to one whit more, if to so much as yours did."

"I think we have very high authority for even the more superficial kinds of politeness, dearest Roderick!" said his aunt, looking up from her work, and speaking for the first time. "'Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love:' that seems to imply every obligation of civility and attention; but the conclusion of the verse goes a great deal farther, 'in honour preferring one another:' this, in my opinion, comprehends all that is courtly in our deportment."

"And I am sure," added Kenneth, with a half-quizzical expression still lingering in his face; "I am sure we have plenty of inducements to be polite from Solomon, though, perhaps, they may not be of the most exalted kind."

"And I may add St. Paul to the Scripture authorities," said Mr. Mackenzie. "'Be pitiful, be courteous,' comprehends a strict connection between the greater and the lesser virtues—a connection which is borne out, my dear Roderick, in the characters of most of your favourite heroes. What, for instance, can be finer than the politeness of Achilles to Priam, when the old man comes alone to the enemy's camp, to petition for the body of his son? Or of Alexander the Great, when he refuses even to look upon the wife and sister of Darius, who have become his prisoners? Indeed, there is no limit to the instances of politeness in Alexander!"

"Oh! papa, do tell me some of them," said Evelyn, who began to prick up her ears at the mention of stories. "I want to hear about Alexander, for mamma says, I shall soon be reading his life."

"One day," said Mr. Mackenzie, addressing himself partly to Evelyn, and partly to Roderick, "Alexander was writing a letter, while an ill-bred person called Parmenio took the liberty of examining its contents over his shoulder. Alexander

was far too polite himself to reprove this impertinence directly—but on finishing the letter after it was sealed, he turned round, and applied his seal to the lips of Parmenio, as a refined manner of telling him to hold as sacred the information he had so unworthily obtained."

"Oh! uncle, that was indeed the very essence of politeness,' exclaimed Flora, in a tone of delight. "I could not imagine anything more refined."

"And don't you perceive," said her uncle, "how entirely it goes to prove how becoming it is to exercise gentleness even when we reprove, seeing that reproof is never so effectual as when it spares the feelings of such as receive it. The magnanimity of Cæsar, after the Catiline conspiracy, is not quite so appropriate to our subject, since it soars rather beyond the regions of politeness. When a cabinet was brought to him, containing valuable papers, such as he was told should put him in possession of the names of all who had conspired against him, he refused to accept it, and desired that it might be publicly burnt, before one of the locks had been opened. This was a splendid act of politeness, and must have secured the fidelity of those whose feelings were spared by it, more than any amount of threats or promises."

"But that was more an act of good policy than of politeness, uncle, was it not?" said Rodeick.

"It was, my boy, certainly an act of great policy," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "and yet that which can convey a necessary reproof, without inflicting pain or humiliation on the person who incurs it, is entitled to a high place among actions of politeness too. There are many modern instances of this kind, which may amuse you. Once, when Charles the Second reigned, a celebrated quaker called William Penn presented himself at court. It is the custom of quakers, or rather I ought to say a *principle*, never to uncover their heads, as a mark of courtesy to a fellow-creature: accordingly, our quaker kept his hat on during his introduction to the king; whereupon Charles addressed him good-humouredly, 'Friend Penn, it is the custom of this place, that only one person should remain covered at a time,' and immediately took off his own hat."

"Well, how ashamed that rude old quaker must have been," said Flora; "and how very good-natured of the king."

"Another time," resumed Mr. Mackenzie, "in still later days, a certain sovereign of England received at his court for the first time a peer, in whose family there is, to this day, a hereditary title to wear their hats in the king's presence. On every other occasion, the nobleman only declared his right by retaining it a single moment; and then, as

the rules of politeness demanded, removed his hat and went uncovered like the rest of the court. A vain young scion of this noble house, however, chose to proclaim his privilege, not only by retaining his hat during his presentation to the king, but was even so ill-bred, as to walk about among the company with his head covered. This piece of pride very soon attracted the general remarks and complaints of the company; and the king at last reproved the silly courtier in these words: 'My lord, you have an undoubted right to wear your hat in my presence, but there is a still higher sovereignty in the presence of the ladies, which I cannot at all permit you to violate.'"

"Now, Roderick," added Mr. Mackenzie, "in both of these instances, which side of the question interests your sympathies?—the person who disdains the voluntary grace of politeness, and chooses to indulge his own insolence at every cost? or the person who manages to show his disregard of the *personal* injury at the same time that he reproves the sentiment from which it sprang?"

Roderick did not immediately answer, and Kenneth took up the argument.

"But, papa, was it not a point of conscience with the quaker to keep his hat on?"

"It might be, my boy, but in my opinion that

does not make it at all more excusable," answered his father. "If the gratification of a point of conscience is only to be obtained by a violation of popular usage, or a disregard to the feelings of those with whom we are brought in contact, the occasion of rendering such a gratification necessary ought to be carefully avoided. If Mr. Penn could not, for his conscience sake, conduct himself as people ought to do in the presence of a sovereign, he ought not to have entered such a presence. Nothing is more calculated to excite contempt, than the bringing forward some high or exalted motive to excuse the indulgence of a petty whim, or vanity, or insolence of our own.

"It is related of Howard, the philanthropist, that a nobleman asked him one day to dinner, and that he accepted the invitation, on condition that the meal should consist of nothing beyond potatoes. The condition was agreed to by his host, and when Mr. Howard presented himself at table, he found twenty-nine dishes of potatoes, each dressed in a different way,—a repast which must have cost the noble entertainer and his cook an infinitely greater degree of trouble, than if Mr. Howard had chosen to leave his fare to their selection. This, instead of being lowliness and humility, was nothing short of absolute rudeness, since Mr. Howard was not only deranging the usual routine

of his host's table, but compelling him to dine on potatoes, for the gratification of his ostentatious abstinence."

"I think, papa," said Kenneth, after this story had been duly commented upon, and the cook's ingenuity sufficiently praised; "I think that the attempt to *out-do* our neighbours in anything is generally very impolite. Even in Mr. Howard's case, the desire of out-doing the nobleman in his moderation seems to me the rudest part of it."

"You are quite right, my boy," answered his father; "any attempt to eclipse our neighbours is ill-bred, even though it be in politeness itself. For instance, to insist upon performing an act of what we consider politeness against the will of the person to whom it is performed, is not only not polite, but in some cases absolutely impertinent. The moment our attentions pass the boundary where they give pleasure, or where they are necessary or acceptable, they degenerate into rudeness; and not a little delicacy of taste and tact may be displayed in finding out the exact line of that boundary. For example, George the Fourth considered the manners of the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire to present the perfection of politeness, when she passed out before him immediately on his offering her the precedence; instead of debating the point, as the other ladies did, who were too polite to

accept the king's civility. The Duchess would not contend the palm of politeness with the king, nor be so ill-bred as to refuse his gallantry."

"Well I do think, uncle," said Flora, as though she were not quite sure whether what she was going to say was allowable or not; "I do think that men are never well-bred, never polite at all, unless they are so to *ladies*. I always find that where anybody is described as being very attentive and considerate to ladies, he is sure to be graceful, and polished, and agreeable in other ways."

Everybody laughed at Flora's grave assertion, and then her uncle answered in an encouraging tone.

"Quite right, my Flora. There never was a really graceful or chivalrous character, who did not understand that your sex ought to be the care and the study of every brave man. It is a very silly sort of pride which keeps boys from paying that attention and deference to your sex, which you were intended by nature to receive; and they are sure to reap the reward of it, sooner or later, in the clownishness of their own manners, and the neglect and indifference which they meet with in society; and this sort of politeness, this very charming and attractive grace of manner, may show itself in so many different ways, that I

scarcely know how I can illustrate it. I once saw a great man who is peculiarly distinguished in the world for this endearing quality, standing with a brilliant party of ladies on the deck of a vessel, which was bound on some party of pleasure on the Thames. A poor woman approached the plank by which the company had passed from the shore to the vessel, and made one or two attempts to brave the danger of crossing it alone, but trembled so much, and seemed so frightened by the dangerous footing it presented, that each time she gave up the attempt in despair. She was a miserable-looking creature, in the dress of a person quite poverty stricken; but this distinguished gentleman had caught a glimpse of her dilemma, and leaving his gay party, he walked forward and handed her on board, with as much grace and elegance of deportment as though she had been a countess, while not a few of his fair friends tittered at what they considered a needless expense of gallantry."

"How pretty! how sweet! what a dear kind person he must have been," exclaimed the girls, while Roderick declared "that this ought to be numbered among the acts, not of gallantry, but of benevolence."

"Well, then," answered his uncle, "here is a instance of the least active, or grave sorts

of politeness. A young officer, whom I knew, on his first entrance into life, was dancing one night at a ball, in the Palace, with a lady of great beauty and rank; it happened that in the middle of the dance, the lady's garter fell to the ground, which he being the first person to perceive, immediately snatched up, at the same time exclaiming, 'I beg a thousand pardons, this is the second time I have lost my garter to-day.' Thus, by his presence of mind and politeness, he managed to appropriate to himself an awkwardness which, although trifling to him, would have covered the lady with confusion, and by this means he changed her blush of wounded modesty into one of very becoming sympathy with an annoyance in which she had no share."

"Oh! that was very clever, that was admirably managed," said Kenneth, to whose arch gallantry this story was peculiarly palatable.

"All the finest characters in history," continued Mr. Mackenzie, "those which inspire us with the deepest interest and admiration, have been distinguished for this grace, and their memories are now much more frequently recalled for it, than for more solid qualities which they may have possessed. There is Sir Walter Raleigh, for example, of whom you and Evelyn were reading yesterday, Flo', as the person who introduced tobacco and

was far too polite himself to reprove this impertinence directly—but on finishing the letter after it was sealed, he turned round, and applied his seal to the lips of Parmenio, as a refined manner of telling him to hold as sacred the information he had so unworthily obtained."

"Oh! uncle, that was indeed the very essence of politeness,' exclaimed Flora, in a tone of delight. "I could not imagine anything more refined."

"And don't you perceive," said her uncle, "how entirely it goes to prove how becoming it is to exercise gentleness even when we reprove, seeing that reproof is never so effectual as when it spares the feelings of such as receive it. The magnanimity of Cæsar, after the Catiline conspiracy, is not quite so appropriate to our subject, since it soars rather beyond the regions of politeness. When a cabinet was brought to him, containing valuable papers, such as he was told should put him in possession of the names of all who had conspired against him, he refused to accept it, and desired that it might be publicly burnt, before one of the locks had been opened. This was a splendid act of politeness, and must have secured the fidelity of those whose feelings were spared by it, more than any amount of threats or promises."

"But that was more an act of good policy than of politeness, uncle, was it not?" said Roderick.

"It was, my boy, certainly an act of great policy," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "and yet that which can convey a necessary reproof, without inflicting pain or humiliation on the person who incurs it, is entitled to a high place among actions of politeness too. There are many modern instances of this kind, which may amuse you. Once, when Charles the Second reigned, a celebrated quaker called William Penn presented himself at court. It is the custom of quakers, or rather I ought to say a *principle*, never to uncover their heads, as a mark of courtesy to a fellow-creature: accordingly, our quaker kept his hat on during his introduction to the king; whereupon Charles addressed him good-humouredly, 'Friend Penn, it is the custom of this place, that only one person should remain covered at a time,' and immediately took off his own hat."

"Well, how ashamed that rude old quaker must have been," said Flora; "and how very good-natured of the king."

"Another time," resumed Mr. Mackenzie, "in still later days, a certain sovereign of England received at his court for the first time a peer, in whose family there is, to this day, a hereditary title to wear their hats in the king's presence. On every other occasion, the nobleman only declared his right by retaining it a single moment; and then, as

I have heard that there were no braver soldiers in the Duke of Wellington's army, than the young men, the sons of nobles and gentlemen, who had been accustomed from their childhood to the best society of London, and were remarkable there for their elegance of manners. Thus you see, that it is only natures which are *really* of the noblest kind, however frivolous they may appear before-hand, which are capable of receiving this external polish, while your ruder and coarser spirits generally prove themselves equally incapable of receiving impressions of a graver kind."

"With *soldiers*, uncle," said Roderick, hesitating; "do you think it is equally so with scholars also?"

"Most decidedly, Roderick; all noble minds must be noble from the same causes, whatever may be the pursuit to which they bend themselves; and nothing can be more pitiable than a wise man buried under the dust of learning, to whom the refinements and amenities of life are unknown. Answer to your own mind, whether you have not heard Dr. Johnson, for example, more frequently quoted in society for his barbarous habits, and uncouth want of taste, than for all his profound acquirements. Now no human being would think of hesitating as to which reputation is in itself the more valuable,

that of him who is celebrated for his literary attainments, or the fame of the merely well-bred man; yet, such is the effect produced by the accomplishments of the latter, if, indeed, it be fair to rate them at a level so mean as accomplishments, that, when brought into contrast, either immediately or by tradition, they never fail to throw the former into the shade.

"Yes, uncle, I am quite aware of that," answered Roderick, ingenuously, "Dr. Johnson's rudeness has often appeared both singular and offensive even to me."

"And if you want an instance of the reverse, for the purpose of contrasting with it," added Mr. Mackenzie, "just turn to the life of Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor to Henry the Eighth, and if you do not see there a combination of profound learning, with such brilliant wit and gallantry, as to make you effectually in love with the latter, I will withdraw my argument. His *learning* in these days is a matter understood and acknowledged; but his extreme charm of manners is an association which hangs round his name like some glittering veil that leaves its own brightness on every lineament. Nor are you to imagine the chivalrous character among scholars at all waxed faint or dim in our own days; the incident of the young Oxonian's gallantry to

Catalani, for instance, goes some way towards proving this."

"Please tell it to me, uncle!" said Flora, "I never heard it."

"When Catalani came first to England, and exhibited her great powers at Oxford, she was still extremely ignorant of our language, so much so, that she could barely manage to express her own wishes, and was quite unable to comprehend others when they talked to her. One evening, at the close of her performance in the music-room, she took up a young gownsman's cap—the flat cap peculiar to the university, in the crown of which there is a thin slip of wood inserted to preserve its shape,—and managed to make the owner understand her curiosity as to what it was composed of. The young scholar, too much flattered by her notice to let his ignorance of *her* language prevent the explanation for a moment, instantly snapped the crown of his cap in pieces, that he might *show* her what he was unable to describe; the great singer was so charmed with the act, that she quoted it in every company into which she was afterwards received, as the most perfect piece of good-breeding that had greeted her in England."

Roderick seemed to enjoy this anecdote very much, there was something in it which gratified

his taste and his fancy; and he asked his uncle whether the after life of the young scholar went to prove him equally distinguished in the walks of wisdom and learning, or whether he was celebrated merely for his grace of manner.

"He lived to attain very high honours at the bar, and in the cabinet," answered Mr. Mackenzie, "and formed one most admirable example of the effect which can be produced on people's sympathies, when the polish and glitter of an elegant deportment constitute but the external ornament of a character distinguished by every substantial virtue and solid acquirement."

"Papa," said little Evelyn, creeping close to her father, and speaking in a very modest tone, "*when you are quite tired* of this long conversation on politeness, will you come and look over Hector and me, while we play a game of draughts?"

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

LONDON:
HARRISON & CO., PRINTERS,
ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

THE

CARDINAL VIRTUES;

OR,

MORALS AND MANNERS CONNECTED.

BY

HARRIETTE CAMPBELL,

AUTHOR OF

THE ONLY DAUGHTER.

The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice, and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him.—PROVERBS xxiii. 24.

Wisdom is the principal thing—therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting, get understanding.—PROVERBS iv. 7.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL II.

LONDON:

JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XLI.

LONDON:
HARRISON AND CO., PRINTERS,
ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

THE Sonnet—showing how much annoyance might sometimes be saved us by a little exercise of fortitude 1

CHAPTER II.

A Chapter on Science, in which some useful information may be acquired with very little trouble . 38

CHAPTER III.

A New Acquaintance—showing how Prejudices may be indulged at the expense of Justice and Prudence 61

CHAPTER IV.

The Box of Gems—a Chapter on History, which contains nothing dry 112

LONDON:
HARRISON AND CO., PRINTERS,
ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

The Shew-box—Shewing how much amusement might sometimes be derived us by a little exercise of fortitude 1

CHAPTER II.

A Chapter on Science, in which some useful information may be acquired with very little trouble . . 32

CHAPTER III.

A New Acquaintance—Shewing how Prejudices may be indulged at the expense of Justice and Independence 61

CHAPTER IV.

The Box of Genius—a Chapter on Poetry—Which contains nothing dry 92

Chapter V.

PAGE

The Falcon—showing an instance of one kind of Fortitude very rare among young Ladies . . 170

Chapter VI.

Showing an instance of another kind of Fortitude very rare even among the bravest 204

THE CARDINAL VIRTUES.

CHAPTER I.

THE SONNET—SHOWING HOW MUCH ANNOYANCE MIGHT SOMETIMES BE SAVED US BY A LITTLE EXERCISE OF FORTITUDE.

I HAVE already tried to show you, my dear readers, in what particular way each member of the little circle at Glenlee was deficient in one or other of the Cardinal Virtues; and even from the last chapter you will have begun to perceive that Roderick was wanting in the sort of moral courage or confidence, the absence of which will often prevent us from doing not only what is agreeable, but even what we know to be right, for no reason at all but a sort of fear, lest we may incur the ridicule or the raillery of our companions. Now, my dear children, I need not tell you that if this foolish fear is strong enough to influence all our actions—if it is sufficient to deter us from fulfilling any duty, whether great or trifling, or to hinder us from making any effort to distinguish ourselves in the path of honourable ambition; it is in itself a complete barrier to our

becoming either great or good. And if you will look round among all your companions, and try to remember which of them is most sensitive to ridicule—which of them is most afraid of being quizzed, and most easily swayed from his purpose by that fear,—I think you are sure to find that these are all the least sensible boys and girls of your acquaintance—the least remarkable for any great qualities, either of head or heart; unless, indeed, you find them aware of their own weakness, and earnestly desirous to overcome it, in which case they cannot fail to turn out estimable characters; because this sort of sensitiveness is a very serious defect, and any one who succeeds in overcoming it is sure to possess courage and self-command enough to root out almost any other imperfections besides.

And now, if you will listen to me, I am going to tell you one very sad instance of Roderick's sensitiveness, and see whether it does not prove that nothing is necessary to render us superior to so foolish a feeling, but a little courage and firmness —a little determination to command ourselves— and a little exercise of that strength of mind, which, when we know ourselves *to be in the right*, ought always to sustain us, even in cases where the opinion of the world may seem to go against us.

One day the little party at Glenlee had all met upon the lawn to wait till it should be time for them to join Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie in the dining-room; for though the lesson hours hindered the young people from dining every day with their papa and mamma, they were always accustomed to join them at dessert; and after their toilettes were performed, they generally wandered through the drawing-room windows out upon the lawn, chatting and talking together till the bell rang.

Well, to-day it happened that Roderick was rather later than usual, and the party was some time on the lawn before he made his appearance; while Hector, contrary to his usual custom, was walking up and down between the two girls, talking very soberly, and Kenneth, with quite as little of his ordinary taste, was bounding all over the lawn, to try a new ball made of India-rubber, which he had lately received from some of his many friends in the neighbourhood.

At last, however, it seemed as if Kenneth were tired of his boisterous sport, for he approached the rest of the group very slowly, reading all the time he walked up to them from a paper which he carried in his hand, and which looked as if it had lately been crumpled up in his pocket. His face wore a very laughing and quizzical expression, such as it usually conveyed when he was enjoying

a capital joke, and as soon as he approached near enough to address the girls, he exclaimed in a chuckling mischievous voice:—

"Oh Flo'! I have made such an admirable discovery,—I have just found a poem of Roderick's, which he has left behind him by mistake, under the tall acacia. I saw him *reclining* there before we went to dress, and I thought he looked very much as though he were *poetizing*, especially as he lingered so long behind us, that he is not come down, you see, even yet. I am so glad I have found this, though it is only a rough copy, and written in pencil, for I shall certainly give it to papa to read at tea-time, and then see whether we shall not have capital fun watching Roderick's blushes."

"Oh! Kenneth, don't," said Flora, with an earnest tone, "you know how much it will plague him; indeed you ought not to quiz poor Roderick when it annoys him so very much; and I know that if he were to guess that you had found a copy of his verses, he would be quite sufficiently vexed without your taking them to uncle."

"Pooh," answered Kenneth, "if sentimental swains will leave their effusions under a tree, I don't think they can expect people to forego the pleasure of reading them. You may depend upon it I shall produce this: it is something more than usually

high-flown, and will make far too good a joke to keep all to oneself. Would you like to hear it?"

"No, indeed," answered Flora, "I am determined I shall not have any hand in your joke, because I do not think it good-natured of you."

"Why, Flo'!" returned the young satirist, "it would not be such a prodigious trial to you, would it, if you were to write some day a fine poem, and to discover that, without intending it, you had become famous in your generation? I know papa will praise these verses of Roderick's, and so I don't mind putting him a little to the blush in the first instance."

"Oh, if they were mine, I should not at all care what you did with them," answered Flora; "I do not at all mind that sort of quizzing, and so it would not be ill-natured if you were to do the same thing to me; but you know how very *touchy* Roderick is, and that alters the case completely."

A little more discussion passed between them on the subject, Flora pleading Roderick's cause, and Kenneth holding out for his own amusement; but before the argument was finished, the bell rang, and they all betook themselves to the dining-room, at the door of which they were joined by Roderick, happily unconscious of the mischief which was plotting against him.

Many were the looks of caution and remon-

strance cast by Flora on her mischievous cousin during the progress of the dessert, all the time of which Kenneth kept smiling to himself, and enjoying his own joke in silence. But at the first pause which occurred in the conversation, after the business of eating walnuts and drinking ginger wine was over, Kenneth's mirth was no longer to be reserved for his own enjoyment, so steadily looking in another direction from Flora, he stretched out his hand, containing the important paper, to his father, and told him that if he opened it he should find something that might interest him.

"Or if you think you will not be able to decipher the handwriting very readily, I will read it aloud, if you please, papa, as I know its contents already," said he, with a very demure smile.

"What! some poetical effusion of your scatter-brained muse, Kenneth, I suppose," answered his papa, in a laughing tone. "Oh, let us have it by all means; I highly approve your notion to read it yourself, as it is not the most agreeable task in the world to decipher a half-obliterated manuscript. Let us have it."

Upon which permission Kenneth, still keeping his eyes from Flora, and without venturing a glance at Roderick, placed the paper before him, and with a great deal of pomposity, clearing his

voice, and reading in a formal ridiculous tone, he began these lines:—

SONNET TO WISDOM.

Hail, Wisdom! Maid of bright and holy birth,
Goddess of upcast eye, and brow serene;
That leav'st thy home above, to walk on earth,
Yet wearest among men thy heavenly mien;
I bid thee hail! I kiss thy garment's hem,
I bow before thy shrine with lowly heart.
Henceforth of all my deeds be thou the aim,
Of every wish as thou already art:
Let others win the smile of earth-born maids,
Fame, Fortune, and Ambition let them woo;
The joy that dazzles, and the wreath that fades,
Let each along his path of life pursue.
All worldly honours round their footsteps shine;
Be thou alone, celestial Wisdom, mine!

It was quite impossible that any one present could entertain a doubt as to who the real author of these unlucky verses was, for Kenneth had no sooner proclaimed the title in his loud pompous tones, than the uncontrollable fidgetting of Roderick, and the scarlet blush that rose to the very roots of his hair, betrayed him immediately. He kept his eyes, however, steadily fixed upon the table, and seemed resolved to master his confusion as long as possible.

Kenneth no sooner discovered, by the direction of his father's glance, that the truth was revealed, than his quizzing propensities were set at liberty at

once, and he began to make use of them with his accustomed glee.

"Is not that pretty well, papa, for a novice in the art of complimenting? I am sure if *wisdom* were a real personage, instead of only a mere idea, there could not be a prettier piece of flattery; that, for instance, about 'kissing the garment's hem,' is quite picturesque; and the 'upcast eye and brow serene,' are both most poetical and gallant, are they not, papa?"

"Indeed they are, Kenneth," answered Mr. Mackenzie, with a smile, directed very kindly towards Roderick, who sat writhing under the infliction of Kenneth's remarks; "I did not think *you* could have written any verses so good as these, they are really by no means amiss."

"They are not mine, I assure you, papa," returned the little wit, with persevering malice, "I picked them off the ground; and unless our trees, as Jacques says, '*carry such fruit as this*,' I suppose they must have been left there, under the great acacia, by the poet in his fit of inspiration. I assure you they are not mine. This sovereign contempt expressed in them for 'Fame, Fortune, and Ambition,' is far too magnanimous for me, and you know all my effusions are in praise of the fair sex, so that I am not likely to speak so slightingly of 'earth-born maids,' as this poet does. Oh! I

assure you, I dare not pretend to soar so high as this."

"I wish you would be so very good as to hand me over the paper," said Roderick, with a look that seemed to imply that his patience was almost exhausted; but Kenneth had not half satisfied his desire for a joke, and so he went on in a tone that seemed only the more mischievous, as he perceived that Roderick was nettled by it.

"Hand it over! No, indeed, an autograph copy of such an effusion is not to be so lightly thrown away; I expect some day, perhaps, that I may be called upon to give it for the benefit of a volume of fugitive pieces, which may be published by the poet, by-and-by; but until then, you may rely upon it I shall hoard it like a miser."

"Kenneth! give me the paper instantly—I will have it without a moment's delay," said Roderick; and he looked as though a strong effort alone prevented him from getting into a violent passion.

"Roderick! how can you expect such a thing?" returned the young tormentor in an impudent accent of pretended surprise, "I have a thousand uses to put it to: for instance, the next time good Lady Ruthven comes, I shall be able to show her from it, that till she can boast of 'upcast eye, and brow serene,' she must not expect to be handed to her carriage; because people's 'deeds' and

'wishes' are all to be saved up for the benefit of celestial Wisdom, and no merely 'earth-born maid' need ever look for any portion of either of them." And he began deliberately to fold up his prize with much ostentation of care and respect, and the most insolent look of successful mischief you can imagine.

Roderick, though somewhat deficient in fortitude, had no lack of courage whatever, and his patience could not stand the severity of the test applied to it; so, without saying anything further, he rose from his seat, with a flash in his eyes such as they did not often present, and after one moment's struggle with Kenneth, possessed himself of the paper by force. The next instant he tore it into shreds, and, without speaking a word, walked hastily out of the room.

"Now, Kenneth," said Mr. Mackenzie, in a grave tone, as soon as Roderick was out of hearing, "I think you have shown a great want of feeling; I did not choose to say as much before Roderick, because I am bent upon discouraging his extreme sensitiveness of temper; but you have behaved very childishly, and what I know will be to you a still more mortifying assurance, with extreme want of politeness. Nothing can be more ill-bred, nor show a greater want of tact, and even kindness of heart, than to push our raillery beyond

the point at which it ceases to be borne with good-humour; and yours, I am sorry to say, was continued even after it became quite evident that it cost Roderick the most painful annoyance. I cannot believe that you were unconscious of this, so I must suppose you had no objection to wound, and nettle, and vex him."

"Oh! papa," returned Kenneth, with a look of genuine regret in his face, "you cannot suppose that I really wished to plague him? I only meant it as a joke; and I thought that people who are very touchy, were generally the better for being quizzed out of it."

"Then you committed a great mistake, my dear boy," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "nothing is more likely to render a sensitive nature more sensitive still, than being exposed frequently to that sort of test which it is unable to bear. A good-humoured joke, or a sportive hit occasionally, are all very well; but none except such as are devoid of *tact*, or what is worse, of kindness of heart, will ever persist in making ridiculous a person whose peculiar turn of mind renders the first approach to it unbearable."

Kenneth's mirth was entirely at an end, and he sat reflecting on his papa's words—the image of regret and vexation.

Meanwhile Mrs. Mackenzie had stolen out of

the room in pursuit of Roderick, and after a short search had found him in the drawing-room, with his face buried in one of the cushions of the sofa. She approached him very gently, and attempted to rouse him by a little playful shake.

"My dear Roderick," said she, in a sweet, kind voice, "you are not going to desert us all for the impertinence of one naughty boy! Come, come, do not be so foolish as to take a silly joke in this serious manner; lift up your head, dearest Roderick, and speak to me."

But Roderick would neither lift up his head nor uncover his face, and by-and-by his aunt perceived that his manhood was not proof against the outrage which his sensitive feelings had sustained, and that large round drops came trickling through his fingers. Mrs. Mackenzie was far too good and kind, and knew too well the proper season in which to offer a rebuke, to attempt to reprove or reason with Roderick at that moment. She only pushed the hair away from his forehead, and kissed it, and spoke kindly and cheerfully to him, and tried to win him back again to the dining-room, by showing him what a feeling of gloom and discomfort would hang about the whole circle if he persisted in staying away.

Roderick, though a touchy, was by no means either a sullen or an obstinate boy, and so he did

not hold out very long against his aunt's kind persuasions, but promised to return to the circle in a few minutes, as soon as he should brush his hair, and walk once across the shrubbery, that the cool air might remove the inflammation from his eyelids.

Roderick and Kenneth were not long of being friends again, for Kenneth was eager to make all sorts of advances, and Roderick was neither revengeful nor unforgiving. But I am sorry to say that even the pain he had inflicted, and of course suffered himself in inflicting, was not sufficient to restrain the laughter-loving propensities for which Kenneth was distinguished, and even after this night many a sly allusion to "up-cast eyes" and "earth-born maids," served to keep alive in Roderick's mind the recollection of the mortifying uses to which his unlucky verses had been applied.

Roderick and Kenneth, though pursuing the same line of study at school, under the care of good Mr. Stewart, were uniformly seen to excel in opposite walks. Roderick, for instance, who was intended for the church, always found himself in his element among the gravest kind of pursuits. The Greek and Latin classics, for example, mathematics, and ancient history, were what engrossed him, while Kenneth, whose tastes all pointed to the life of a soldier, preferred the

study of modern history—the lives of heroes of more recent days—and the whole range of what is called light literature, which means poetry, and romances, and biography, and books of travels.

It happened, a short time after the affair of the sonnet, that Mr. Stewart announced to the boys the period at which their midsummer holidays should commence, at the same time declaring his intention to invite all their parents—for several other boys, beside ours from Glenlee, were accustomed to study with Mr. Stewart—to come and be present at the examination of his pupils on the last day of the term, that they might be able to judge more correctly of the progress made by each during the months that were past. He enumerated the different prizes which had been already set forth as objects of competition, and added this interesting intelligence—that as he considered English literature to be the branch of study which had been least carefully attended to during the last term, he particularly wished to revive the young people's acquaintance with it; and that he meant accordingly to give a beautiful little gold medal, which he displayed to them, as the reward of the best English poem that should be produced, the competitors being left to choose their own subjects, as well as the particular order of versification of which they should make use.

These, as you will readily believe, were very important tidings to the boys, and all the other prizes, which consisted merely in handsome books on different subjects, sank into positive insignificance in comparison with the gold medal.

It seemed as if Roderick's fate wished to make him some compensation for the affront which he had lately undergone in consequence of his poetical taste, and all the circle congratulated him that he should now be able to turn his despised talent to account. Even Kenneth seemed to be quite aware that it was now Roderick's turn to triumph, though, as usual, he could not resist a little bit of satire on the occasion, and declared that "no one could have any chance with Roderick, the chosen votary of 'Wisdom,' since he had 'kissed her garment's hem,' before he could be suspected of interested motives for his devotion."

No one inquired of the young students what subjects they had fixed upon for their respective poems. It seemed generally understood, that this was to be a secret; and the interest felt by the lookers on in the issue of the contest was very much enhanced by their present ignorance of the preparations that were in progress for it.

There was only one month given to the scholars in which to prepare their effusions,—and a busy and important season it was, for every minute not

devoted to the pursuit of more abstruse studies was spent with a pencil and a scrap of paper and knitted brows and looks of poetical perplexity, such as called down many a light-hearted joke from the little girls, not without an occasional complaint that the boys were perpetually in a brown study.

It had been settled that the holidays of Flora and Evelyn should commence a day or two before the boys' exhibition, on purpose that they might be quite disengaged, and at liberty to attend; and it would be difficult to determine which hearts beat the quickest as the momentous day approached —those of the girls who were so deeply interested as spectators, or those of the young competitors themselves.

Lady Ruthven, the same lady who has been several times already quoted in this and in the last chapters, and who had a young son of her own under Mr. Stewart's care, had proposed calling at Glenlee, on her way to the clergyman's house, that she and Mrs. Mackenzie might witness the exhibition of their boys in company; and old Mrs. Buchanan had returned from her distant visit just in time to be present, so that there was quite a large party going from Glenlee, and the excitement of the morning was enhanced four-fold by the circumstance.

A merrier party could not easily have been found than that which assembled for breakfast in the parlour at Glenlee on the important morning of the trial; and many a good-humoured joke was passed upon the young poets, as you may be sure, and many a playful prognostic risked as to who should win and who should lose the eagerly contested gold medal.

But you will easily imagine, that not a little nervous anxiety was mixed up with the mirth of the competitors themselves; and that notwithstanding all the laughing that went on, Kenneth's cheeks were flushed, and his eyes sparkled with a brilliancy that did not always belong to them, while Roderick, on whom excitement had a different effect, looked many degrees paler than usual.

The business of this morning did not, however, come with anything like abruptness on our little party. Throughout the previous week the girls had been busy preparing pretty-coloured boards as portfolios, in which the poems might be deposited, while mamma, just to mark the interest which she took in the matter, contributed the riband with which to tie them up. And now the poets themselves, with praiseworthy solemnity, produced each his little case; for so cautious had they been, that no eyes except their own had witnessed the settlement of the verses in their gay

repositories. Then followed the adjustment of walking and driving dresses; then an announcement from young ladies and their mammas that all were ready; and, finally, a general distribution of the party in their carriages, which was very much facilitated by the offer of Lady Ruthven to carry papa and one of the girls in hers. The day proved beautifully bright and gay, and a short drive by the side of the loch brought them all to Mr. Stewart's house, where a few minutes were spent in waiting for such of the company as had not yet arrived, while the young students arranged their books, and took their places;—and then the business of the day began.

The examination of the classical studies occupied a long time; and as the little girls could not, of course, take much interest in that, they were disposed for a while to think, that the reading of the English poems would never take place. Yet when the prizes, even for classical acquirement, came to be distributed, it was wonderful to see how the better feeling of the spectators went along with them. There was not one little sister there whose heart did not beat with joy when she saw her brother rewarded or heard him praised, even though she was profoundly ignorant, not merely of the extent of his merits, but of the subject of which he appeared to have made himself master.

At last all the other business came to a close, and the English poems being called for, each candidate was directed to stand up and read his own; but as the order of exhibition commenced with the youngest, our party had a good many very indifferent rhymes to listen to from the juveniles before it came to the turn of any in whom they took a deep interest to exhibit. Kenneth was the first among the little group of Mackenzies and Ruthvens to be called upon, and when he got up and opened his manuscript, you might have heard Flora's, and Evelyn's, and even his mamma's heart, beat with excitement and anxiety.

He blushed very much when he began, and at first his voice shook exceedingly; but Kenneth was considered to possess some proficiency in the agreeable science of elocution, and before he had proceeded through a single page, he quite recovered himself, and finished his task with infinite grace and expression.

The subject of the poem, as every body expected, was the career of a young soldier. It was called "The Campaign," and under this title, Kenneth carried his hero through every stage of his progress, beginning with the adieux to his father's home, and going through just such an opening of a military career, as boys love to paint; till he came to describe the eve of a

great battle,—the soldier standing at the door of his tent, looking up into the skies, and thinking of all the dear faces in his home, which he may perhaps have seen for the last time. Then followed the battle itself,—a most furious affair that battle of Kenneth's was—with the colours flying, and the horses snorting, and the cannon thundering, and the smoke curling over all, till at last his young hero was killed, and some of his faithful soldiers wrapped him in his cloak, and buried him beneath the moonlight.

Now this poem certainly could not boast of much originality of illustration, neither was the subject one which betrayed a great deal of imagination in the young poet, but it happened to be one which engaged Kenneth's whole heart, and he had infused a good deal of spirit into some of the lines, and paid some pretty compliments to his own happy home in the commencement. Moreover, the recitation was extremely well delivered, for his voice was clear and sweet, and his manner, after the first fright went off, became easy and animated; so that altogether, Kenneth's poem received at its close a burst of applause, such as left all the compliments paid to former readings at an immeasurable distance.

Flora and Evelyn could scarcely restrain their delight—their eyes glistened, and sparkled, and

they joined in the plaudits of the assembled throng, with a clapping of hands, which nothing could have stopped but the appearance of the next competitor.

According to the plan which required the boys to stand up, beginning with the youngest, and so going up to the eldest, it ought now to have been Roderick's turn, for he was almost two years younger than young Ruthven, who was the eldest of the group; but, contrary to all precedent, Ruthven took his place and began to read, while the little girls exchanged with Mrs. Mackenzie and with each other questions as to the probability that Roderick had persuaded his friend to allow him a little longer time to collect his courage.

Master Ruthven's poem was a passage from *Ovid*, very elegantly rendered into English verse; and received at its termination a large share of applause from every one, more especially from the grave, grown-up judges who were present; but Flora and Evelyn could not suppress the delight with which they heard several people declare their opinion, that he would lose the prize on account of the subject of his poem not being strictly in agreement with the terms of the competition.

It was now Roderick's turn, and again Flora and Evelyn suffered all the excitement which had preceded their first recognition of Kenneth at

the reading-desk. This time, however, the young candidate was so long of making his appearance, that the girls, and even Mrs. Mackenzie herself, began to entertain apprehensions lest something might have gone wrong. There was a great bustle among the boys, who all seemed to crowd eagerly round the bench where Roderick was seated, and to address themselves to him; but the general suspense did not last more than a few moments, for Mr. Stewart declared aloud that the only remaining candidate having *declined to compete*, the exhibition might now be considered as at a close; and the moment arrived for the awarding of the gold medal.

Declined to compete! Roderick decline to compete for the gold medal!—the object of all the hopes and fears of the household throughout the last month! Roderick! who was known to excel all the rest in the art of rhyming, and who had never before found so good an opportunity for the exercise and the display of his taste. Roderick! whom every body knew to have been plunged in the perplexities of composition during four entire weeks, and who had that very morning been provided with a beautiful cover of red morocco paper, manufactured by Evelyn, for the purpose of enclosing his manuscript!! The girls could not believe their own senses. They

felt positively shocked by the extent of the surprise and disappointment; and even when the general shout proclaimed Kenneth the successful candidate, they almost forgot to join in the congratulations which followed, so absorbed were their minds by the unaccountable mystery of Roderick's behaviour.

A happy boy was Kenneth! The beautiful little gold medal was suspended from his button-hole by a short purple riband, much in the same manner in which you may have seen medals worn by officers who fought at Waterloo; and with this decoration, he might be seen fluttering up and down among his friends, receiving the congratulations of all with a face that sparkled with triumph and excitement.

No one took any notice of Roderick. He was not even asked the reason of his refusal to compete; every one seemed to consider that it must be an unpleasant subject to him, and he was allowed to steal over in silence to the side of his own party.

"Are you well, my Roderick?" said his aunt, in a sweet kind voice, as she passed her hand over his forehead, and looked into his face. It was still unusually pale, with a dark line round his eyes, as if he had suffered more agitation than the most bashful that had exhibited. "Are you quite well?"

"Quite well, thank you, aunt, but—" He seemed as if he were panting to make his explanation to her, but was prevented by the very excitement of his feelings. His aunt, however, stopped him directly, with an expression of great regret, not unmingled with reproach, but still as kind as usual.

"Foolish Roderick!" said she; "I will not hear a word just now, but when we go home I shall tell you how you have disappointed me."

Even the girls had tact enough to see that any questions which they could put, would only give Roderick pain; so not a word was said about the matter, except that little Evelyn showed her sympathy by clasping his hand close, and remaining beside him all the time the others went forward to examine the medal, and congratulate Kenneth.

At last, the several parties returned to their carriages, and there was a great bustle before the whole were on their way home. Lady Ruthven insisted upon conveying the young hero, and as Flora would not consent to be parted again from her own circle, Hector was placed on the box beside Hugh, to make room for her; and in this order they resumed their drive. But just as they were setting off, old Mr. Drummond came to the side of the carriage, and said in a half-laughing kind of tone to Mrs. Mackenzie,—

"I am coming, my dear madam, to have a private conference with Roderick, to-morrow at twelve o'clock. I hope you will take care that he is not out of the way."

The drive home was not half so merry as the setting out had been. Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie talked to each other about the merits of the different boys, and their separate styles of reading and of deportment; and Roderick seemed desirous of showing himself to be in high spirits, for he talked, and laughed, and quoted lines and ideas from almost every poem that had been read, thus proving how deep his interest had been in the effect produced by others, although he had voluntarily abstained from attempting to produce any himself. Yet it was quite evident that he was not at ease, for his attempts at gaiety were so awkward, that even Flora and Evelyn were not infected by them, but continued silent and disappointed throughout the drive.

On their arrival, they found Kenneth in the house before them. Lady Ruthven had set him down at the gate, after having participated in his triumph with so much cordiality and good nature, that, in truth, Kenneth seemed half wild with delight. She had, moreover, been so much delighted with the opening lines of "The Campaign," in which Kenneth had described his own home,

that she wished very much to possess a copy of them; and Kenneth had promised to write them out for her, and he was to carry them to Ardvaigh, Lady Ruthven's house, on the following day, where he was to remain to dinner, because it was the first day of his holidays.

Then the medal had to be examined and displayed again; it was a very beautiful little medal, no bigger than a shilling, but with a finely executed device on one side, of a flying figure of Fame with her trumpet; and on the other, a tiny wreath of bay leaves, enclosing some pretty Greek characters, which, as Mr. Mackenzie informed the little girls, meant, when translated, "Success is Fame." In short, Kenneth was so elated by the success and the fame of this day, that he seemed either to have forgotten the circumstance which deprived him of Roderick's rivalry, or to have no thought to bestow upon it.

Mrs. Mackenzie watched Roderick closely, while the display of Kenneth's triumphs was going forward; and though she knew him to be superior to the petty meanness of jealousy, she saw, while he was examining the pretty medal, and its flattering motto, that his eyelids drooped with a very sad expression of disappointment and mortification; and while all the rest were engaged otherwise, she managed, a short time afterwards, to put her arm

through his, and lead him gently and half unconsciously out upon the lawn.

"I fully anticipated that the medal would have been yours, dear Roderick," said Mrs. Mackenzie, after they had entered the shrubbery. "I consider you to have a much superior talent for poetry to Kenneth; can you tell what prevented the prize from becoming your own?"

"Yes, aunt," returned he, with an awkward attempt to laugh; "*one* reason certainly was, because I did not compete for it."

"No, Roderick," pursued his aunt; "the *real* reason lay in the *feeling* which kept you from competing; can you tell me what that was?"

"I am sure I don't know, but I never intended to compete from the first," was his reply.

"Well, that makes me the more certain of what before I only suspected," answered Mrs. Mackenzie. "Tell me, dear Roderick, was it not that you still smarted under the recollection of the ridicule thrown by Kenneth upon your former verses, and that you were resolved such another petty occasion of annoyance should not be furnished against you?"

Roderick did not answer.

"Now, my dear Roderick, let us examine the risk you ran, and the danger you avoided, and then judge whether you have acted a wise and

prudent part, or one that is weak and spiritless, and even proud, in thus revenging the folly of a thoughtless boy like Kenneth upon yourself. If you had failed to obtain the prize, dear Roderick —if you had secured the same degree of approbation, for instance, received by young Ruthven, should you have considered yourself a fit subject for ridicule or jest?"

"No, aunt, certainly not, no one thought of laughing at Ruthven," answered Roderick, very readily.

"And if you had obtained the medal, and had heard your poem praised by people so well qualified to judge as Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Drummond, and your uncle, would you after that have been put about by the pert remarks of such as Kenneth?"

"No, of course I should not; if I had been *quite certain* of success, of course I should have read my poem with the rest," answered Roderick immediately.

"And do you consider your poem—for this acknowledgment that you had prepared one is just what I expected to hear,—do you consider it inferior in merit, either to Ruthven's or to Kenneth's poetry?"

"No, aunt," returned Roderick, very modestly, "I do not think you would find it so."

"And before you had heard their poems, or before the examination took place, judging merely from their qualifications as scholars, and from your own, should you have imagined either of them more likely to write a good poem than yourself, dear Roderick?"

"I don't know, aunt; perhaps not."

"Well, Roderick," said his aunt, in an earnest and grave tone, "you see, my dear boy, that in either case, whatever had been the issue of the competition, you must have occupied a position as much above the reach of ridicule as you have now placed yourself beneath it. If you had failed, you would at least have been as high in the list as others whom you consider to have acquitted themselves respectably; if you had succeeded, no ridicule, as you yourself acknowledge, could have approached you; and in either case, you would have enjoyed the manly and agreeable consciousness, that you had done what was expected of you, instead of giving way to a proud and sickly sensitiveness, which has brought nothing but mortification as its reward."

Roderick walked on quite silently, and in a minute afterwards his aunt spoke again.

"But I will say a great deal more than this, dearest Roderick. I will confess to you my own firm conviction, that if you had chosen, instead

of giving way to that foolish weakness, to have mastered it at the proper moment, and to have read your poem like the others, you would most certainly have taken the prize rather than Kenneth."

Roderick's eyes sparkled with pleasure at this announcement, and his aunt added—

"So you see, my dear boy, your foolish pride has only proved a barrier in the way of your obtaining an honourable distinction of great importance in your own eyes, and which all your pursuits and habits rendered it most probable from the outset that you should both win and value. And what has it gained for you instead?—doubtless the disapprobation of your teacher, the disappointment of all your friends, and the extreme mortification of your own feelings; while, so far from securing the object you had in view, it has, *in reality*, placed you in the only position you could have occupied, where ridicule would be both appropriate and deserved—since surely he is most worthy of contempt who lacks courage to brave the chances of failure, where these are not such as to cut him off from a strong probability of success."

Roderick walked along in silence after his aunt had ceased speaking, and his face lost nothing of its paleness, nor of the spiritless and disap-

pointed expression which it had formerly worn. On the contrary, his lip quivered once or twice, and he remained silent, only because he could not have trusted his voice to reply.

"Would you like an opportunity of repairing some of these mistakes, dearest Roderick?" resumed his aunt at last.

"Yes, aunt, exceedingly," answered he very readily, "I think myself that I have been very foolish."

"Well, my dear boy, promise me, that when old Mr. Drummond comes to-morrow, you will not only tell him the true reason of your withdrawal from the examination to-day, but that you will put him in possession of your poem, good-humouredly, and of your own accord, whether you are asked for it or not."

"Oh! aunt," remonstrated Roderick.

"Nay, if you are determined still to indulge a weakness, which you have acknowledged to be foolish and unmanly, I need not waste my advice any longer," interrupted his aunt; "I imagined that you would have been most grateful for any opportunity of repairing the mortifying errors of this day."

"And so I will, dearest aunt; I am most grateful, and I will do any thing you wish," said he, in a very subdued tone; "only, if you please, I

would rather you did not speak of it to-night before them all."

Mrs. Mackenzie promised to indulge this remaining trace of sensitiveness, and after a little more conversation they re-entered the house, Roderick looking by many degrees less unhappy than he did when they left it.

Meantime the youthful conqueror's joy remained at its height. Lady Ruthven's flattering notice in the morning had gone a great way towards turning his head, and to make ready the copy of his *Introduction*, which she had requested, and which was to be prepared against his visit the next day, furnished him with occupation for head and hands throughout the evening.

Roderick remained quiet and thoughtful, but the dejected expression of his face had gradually worn off; and though Mrs. Mackenzie watched whether any little spark of enmity towards Kenneth, as the remote cause of his own failure, or of jealousy that he had eclipsed himself, could be traced in Roderick's manner,—she could not discover the smallest shadow of such a disposition; and a little incident which occurred in the course of the evening confirmed this assurance tenfold.

It happened, that only a few days previously, Kenneth, in pursuing his favourite joke upon

Roderick's unfortunate poem, had drawn several very absurd caricatures of the Goddess of Wisdom in all manner of ridiculous attitudes. One of these, for example, represented Lady Ruthven in a flowing robe, and Roderick sprawling at her feet to kiss the hem of it. At the time this figure was sketched, every one had remarked it to be a striking likeness, and though the wit had made many attempts to catch the same spirit in other cases, this one remained the only tolerable picture of the lady it was meant to represent.

In drawing his caricatures, Kenneth had made use of a pen and ink, and had scribbled them on the leaves of a packet of writing-paper which lay in a portfolio on the drawing-room table; and, by a very curious accident, it chanced that, without dreaming of his mistake, he had written out his verses on one of these identical sheets of paper.

There was not matter enough to fill more than one page of writing, so that he had no occasion to turn the leaf, and had not the smallest idea of the contents of the inside pages. Accordingly, he had finished his copy of the lines on a page which looked fair and white, and in no way indicated the mischievous nature of the drawing traced on the reverse side; nor would the circumstance probably have been discovered till it was too late, had it not chanced that Kenneth left the paper lying open

while he went up stairs, according to his mother's directions, to procure a French wafer out of her own writing-box.

While he was gone, Flora went over to examine the verses, bent down to read them, and then, in a careless manner, turned the leaf, and discovered the naughty drawing on the other side. At the first glimpse she gave a little start, and her impulse evidently was to proclaim the discovery aloud, but the next moment she turned the leaf back again, and, with a smile of great amusement and a little malice, she retreated from the table.

No one had remarked her but Roderick, and, without speaking, he also went over and, examining the paper, found out what had amused her, and, like her, returned to his seat.

Here was a fine opportunity for Roderick to revenge himself for all that he had endured from Kenneth's satirical vein. If he said nothing about the matter, Kenneth would, no doubt, present his verses with their obnoxious accompaniment; and if Kenneth, with his own hands, gave to Lady Ruthven a paper, in which she herself was caricatured in the most grotesque and ridiculous manner, it might fairly be inferred that the sun of his popularity with her would decline. These things all flashed into Roderick's mind in a moment; he felt certain that Flora had also con-

sidered them, from the wicked little smile with which she closed up the paper again, and he imagined that she at least would have no objections that Kenneth's vanity should receive a slight shock after all the homage which had this day been offered to it. Nay, the idea crossed Roderick's own mind, that faults more trifling than Kenneth's unsparing love of satire had been as severely punished as his would be by the exposure.

For one moment it glanced across Roderick's mind, that to let the paper go as it was, might afford a lesson to Kenneth not the less useful that it was somewhat severe; but the very next instant his more generous nature prevailed, and he felt that he at least was not the person called upon to inflict a mortification so dire, as he well knew the mistake must prove to Kenneth, if allowed to take effect.

By the time Roderick finished all these cogitations, Kenneth had returned, folded his sheet with all the neatness and precision possible, and without dreaming of looking further than his own written page, had even addressed it, and was in the act of fixing on the wafer. Roderick's revenge was certain—beyond the possibility of failure, and one involuntary glance at Flora showed him that she was enjoying the convic-

tion exceedingly,—the next moment Roderick approached the table once more.

"Kenneth, are you going to carry that paper to Lady Ruthven to-morrow?"

"Yes, to be sure, why should I have written it out but for that purpose?" was the reply.

"Well, do me the favour to look between the leaves before you seal it up," continued Roderick; and he stood beside the table to watch the effect which the discovery would produce.

Kenneth unfolded his sheet, and turned over the leaf, and when his own performance there displayed struck his eye, the blood rushed over his cheeks and forehead, and he gazed at it for a moment without having power to utter a syllable.

A thousand different ideas rushed into Kenneth's brain at that moment. It was then, that for the first time he perceived the share which his own impertinent and unfeeling habit of satire had had in Roderick's extraordinary behaviour at the examination—it was then, that he seemed for the first time to acknowledge to himself, that if Roderick had chosen to compete, the prize would never have belonged to him. And when the extreme generosity of Roderick's conduct, in refusing to take advantage of an

opportunity of retaliation so tempting and so excusable, came to present itself, the effect of his meditations was complete, and an entire revolution took place in his feelings.

His first act was to take off the gold medal from his button-hole, and to lay it down at some distance from himself upon the table. Then he rose and sauntered over to the sofa, where Roderick had already resumed his seat, threw himself down with a thoughtful air beside him, and letting his arm fall caressingly on Roderick's shoulder, he turned round, and without addressing any one, exclaimed,—

"I am determined I shall never wear that medal again!"

CHAPTER II.

A CHAPTER ON SCIENCE, IN WHICH SOME USEFUL INFORMATION MAY BE ACQUIRED WITH VERY LITTLE TROUBLE.

One evening, it chanced that the hour of tea had been for some reason or other deferred at Glenlee unusually late, so late that the pastimes of the day were completely over, even with Hector, the most active and indefatigable of pleasure hunters; and fairly tired out with his exertions, he was seated at the tea-table, waiting the time when his aunt and the rest of the party would seat themselves also, and leaning his head upon his hand the very image of thoughtful abstraction.

Now it happened, that of all the circle, Hector certainly was the one least addicted to reflective moods, and so it was quite natural that something should be expected to result from even his few minutes of profound thought. Accordingly, after a long and earnest contemplation of the silver tea-kettle, which was boiling furiously over its spirit lamp upon the table, he exclaimed,—

"I wonder what induces people to make such a piece of work about *steam*."

Every one laughed at the result of Hector's brown study, and his uncle replied, as he seated himself at the tea-table,—

"Why, really it is difficult to say what makes the world occupy itself so much about trifles. One would imagine, that when peg-top and marbles were to be had, no one would take up his time with such a child's toy as the steam-engine."

Hector joined heartily in the laugh that was raised against him, and then returned to the subject.

"Well, but what I mean is, that I wonder how people have been able to make steam so useful; and I wonder how it is useful, and of what use it can be?"

"Ah! that is another mode of putting the question," returned Mr. Mackenzie; "that sounds somewhat like a desire for philosophical research, and if such really be your purpose, I am bound, in common with all true lovers of science, to assist you with my best endeavours. In the first place, let me hear if you can tell what steam is?"

"Steam!" repeated Hector, "why water, to be sure."

"Very true, but not very scientific, Hector," answered his uncle; "if steam and water are strictly the same thing, why should they have different names, and different properties? I sup-

pose, if you were thirsty, a *drink of steam* would not prove very satisfactory; neither, if you wished to wash your hands, would you find steam entirely answer the place of water, in performing your ablutions: what is the difference, then, between water and steam?"

Hector looked a little foolish and considerably puzzled, and then he said, somewhat diffidently—

"Steam is the *smoke* of water."

"Very well answered, my boy," said his uncle, without joining in the general titter, "your *terms* are not very correct, but your ideas are quite right and clear. By *smoke*, I know quite well that you mean vapour, and steam is certainly the vapour of water, or more correctly speaking, water in a state of vapour. Do you know any other state in which we ever see water, except these two of liquid and vapour?"

Hector very soon regained his courage, when his uncle spoke in earnest, and addressed him with so much appearance of respect; and by-and-by he answered quite boldly,—

"Yes, uncle, *ice* is water in another state."

"Exactly—and in *what* state is water when it becomes ice, since it is neither in the state of a liquid, nor of air or vapour?" asked Mr. Mackenzie.

A few moments of reflection, during which

the circle waited for Hector's decision in most mischievous and laughing anxiety, proved quite sufficient for the arrangement of his ideas, and he answered, with a degree of dignity very becoming to him, and quite regardless of every thing but the subject under discussion,—

"It is in a *solid* state, uncle."

"Very well indeed, my dear boy," said Mr. Mackenzie, in a most encouraging voice, "you have answered most intelligently; and now, Hector, since all substances with which we are acquainted,—and by substances, I mean every thing that possesses *weight*,—since all material substances are capable of existing in all these three states,—in the state of a solid, in the state of a liquid, and in the state of a *gas* or vapour,—can you tell me what power, what process, what influence it is that changes them from one state into another?"

Hector paused so long over this question, that his uncle was obliged to assist him a little.

"What is it that turns ice into water, and water into steam?"

"Heat!" answered Hector, immediately.

"Precisely," returned his uncle; "and the application of heat is what produces the same results in all other substances whatever."

"Is it, uncle?" asked Hector, with a doubtful

look. "No, not in all substances, I should think; for see, when I drop this lump of sugar into my tea, it is very soon changed into a liquid state, and yet I am sure that it is not the heat entirely which changes it, because it would be the same if my tea were cold, only that it would take longer time."

"Very reasonably argued, indeed, Hector," said his uncle, smiling, "and that objection of yours opens up a new field of scientific results altogether; I am delighted to see that you can form judgments of your own, without taking those of other people on trust. With regard to the lump of sugar, however, don't you see that it is not liquefied, it is only dissolved, or mixed with the water. All the particles of sugar are still entire, though you cannot discover them by the sight; and if you could remove the water they would all come together again, and you would still have your piece of sugar quite entire and solid as before; whereas, if you were to apply the necessary degree of *heat* to it, it would be *decomposed* instead of being only *dissolved*, and would pass off into the state of gas or vapour, from which it would be quite impossible to recall it to its former state of solidity by any other process."

"It would in fact be destroyed, then—annihilated," exclaimed Kenneth, who, in common with

the rest of the group, was becoming quite interested by the discussion.

"Not at all, Kenneth," returned his father, "there is no instance, which you can name, of any portion of this visible world, or of the substances which compose it, ever becoming *annihilated;* everything changes its formation, its character, and properties: but the principles or elements of each, however altered and modified, still continue in existence, and by combining or mingling with other bodies, they return to the performance of their active duty in the endless operations of God's Providence."

"Uncle, I want to know what you meant a minute ago, by saying the sugar would be *decomposed,* instead of *dissolved,*" said Flora. "I wish very much to know the exact meaning of *decomposed,* because I always considered, that if anything was so destroyed as to be quite dissolved in water, that it must surely be quite *decomposed.*"

"That is a very important question of yours, Flo'," answered her uncle; "and I should wish you perfectly to understand the reply to it. Let us, in the first place, quite comprehend what is meant by *composition* and *decomposition;* and now let me see, which of you all will most cleverly understand my illustration."

Here Mr. Mackenzie cut a square piece from

the plum-cake on the table, and began to lecture upon it.

"I suppose you all know what this plum-cake is made of?" said he; "that it contains certain proportions of eggs, flour, sugar, butter, spices, and plums; and that the act of mixing them all up together, or compounding them, may be called the *composition* of the cake; for I assure you, Roderick, a plum-cake is *composed* as well as a Latin theme, or a copy of Greek Iambics."

A laughing assent followed this piece of information, and Mr. Mackenzie went on: "Well, supposing I was to grind, or crumble down the cake, till I had reduced it to a powder, or supposing I was to soak, or mix it with water, till I had made it into a paste, would either of these processes *decompose* the plum-cake?"

There was a short silence, and then Roderick answered: "No, uncle, neither process would change it from one state into another; because both a powder and a paste must, to speak properly, be called *solids*."

"Very true, Roderick!" returned his uncle; "what course must I follow, then, for the decomposition of the cake?"

"I can answer that," said Flora, eagerly; "you must separate the eggs, and the flour, and the sugar, and the plums from one another, and return it back

again to the state which it presented before it was *composed;* because, *decompose* is, in short, just the same as *unmake.*"

"Logically proved, Flo'!" said Mr. Mackenzie; "you perceive, that though we were to grind down the cake into the smallest grains possible, each grain would still possess its share of the different ingredients of the cake—would in itself be a compound or *composition* of flour, eggs, sugar, plums; whereas, if we separate the ingredients, each one retains its simplicity without any connection with the others. Well, it is just the same with regard to all the substances that surround us. There are almost no such things as *simple* bodies in the world; every thing we see, is a *compound* of other substances, and each of these compounds is, in its turn, compounded of others; that means, that the flour, and the butter, and the sugar, and so on, are each of them composed of other substances: so you see that we only go on multiplying these compounds to infinity.

"Now, what I want you next to understand, is the nature of the process by which the composition and decomposition of things are perpetually carried on around us. You all of you know, I think, what is meant by *attraction,* don't you?" said Mr. Mackenzie, looking round on the group.

"Oh, yes! oh, yes!" said a number of voices.

"The connection between the needle and the magnet," exclaimed Flora.

"The power that keeps the earth in its orbit," said Kenneth.

"The impulse which makes the apple fall to the earth," added Roderick.

"Dear me, what a multiplicity of proofs!" exclaimed Mr. Mackenzie; "it is strange enough, that among them all there is not one which will quite answer my purpose. I do not mean either the peculiar attraction of the magnet, nor that quoted by Kenneth which may be more properly distinguished as gravitation,—I mean the particular power which keeps the individual parts of any substance together, that *combines* them, and prevents them from returning to their own simple and original forms."

"Yes, uncle, I understand," said Flora, who was listening with all her ears. "The power which keeps the plum-cake a solid, and prevents it from turning into a liquid, or a vapour."

"No, my Flora, not exactly; you know, when the compound of the plum-cake is first formed, that the ingredients are a sort of powder, and have not the same appearance which they present,—now they have become a solid or compacted mass. Well, what I want to show you is, that these particles which compose the mass, and

which are possessed each of its various parts of egg, flour, sugar, &c.,—that each of these must be under the influence of some principle which makes it *adhere* to the others; that there must be some power which keeps all the little particles together, and enables them to form a mass."

"Yes, uncle, I understand."

"Well, then, that power is called in science—and where the subject to be illustrated is something more philosophical than a plum-cake,—chemical attraction, or the *attraction of aggregation, or adhesion.*"

"Well, uncle," said Roderick, with a very puzzled and preoccupied look, "but then you know there must be another sort of *attraction*, which keeps the ingredients themselves together; or else how are the particles of egg, and flour, and sugar, to hold together, or *combine*, so as to form a particle of plum-cake?"

"Very scientifically urged, Roderick!" said his uncle; "that is precisely the next step in my lecture. That sort of attraction of which you speak, is the attraction of *affinity*, and the difference between them is, that *aggregation* holds together parts that are the same, each one resembling the other—and *affinity*, parts that are different, each one differing from the other. And now do you all comprehend?"

"Oh! yes, papa," said little Evelyn, turning up her pale little face glowing with intelligence to her father; "the *affinity* is the cook's doing, because she can make the different ingredients mingle, or combine with each other; but the *aggregation* is the oven's doing, because it only can make the parts hold together that are composed."

"Excellent! my darling," said her papa; "you could not more clearly have proved to me, that what I have been saying is quite distinct, and within the limits of your understanding. And now to return to the original subject, from which we started: Hector, which of these powers of attraction is it that is destroyed, when we change water into steam?"

This question opened up such an entirely new train of ideas, that for some moments the children were too much engaged in considering it to make any reply.

"Oh! uncle," said Flora, at last, "there are no *ingredients* in water, you know—so the attraction that holds together parts that are different, cannot of course have anything to do with it."

"I beg your pardon, my Flora," answered her uncle; "water is composed of two most important ingredients, which, when our knowledge of chemistry shall improve a little, I dare say we shall some day or other discuss; and both kinds

of attraction—*aggregation* and *affinity*—operate in water to a very great extent."

"It must be the attraction of aggregation that is destroyed in steam," said Roderick, after a thoughtful pause; "because steam is just little particles of water, each resembling the other as closely as possible."

"It is, my boy!" answered his uncle; "and you have supplied the exact test by which you can always detect the difference between the two kinds of attraction. When the attraction of aggregation is destroyed,—as, for instance, when you crumble down a piece of plum-cake, or when you crush a fragment of stone to powder—the parts are the same that they ever were, though in the different state to which you have reduced them; that is, you can quite easily determine what substance or mass they originally formed. But when you take away the attraction of affinity, you change the appearance, the nature, and properties of the parts entirely, which form new substances altogether when they combine; as eggs, flour, sugar, &c. present totally different appearances simple, and when combined in a plum-cake; and in the same manner, the two gases, oxygen and hydrogen, which form the ingredients of water, are extremely different when they combine and become water, and when they are discovered simple.

"But there is another effect which is produced by the destruction, or rather the suspension, of the attraction of *aggregation*," continued Mr. Mackenzie, "and that is, to increase the *bulk* of the substance from which it is removed. I think, Evie, you have almost succeeded in removing the aggregation of your piece of plum-cake; and now that you have reduced it to a powder, see how much more bulk it has—how much more space it occupies than when it was in a mass. Do you think this applies equally in the case of water?"

"Oh, yes, I am sure it does," said Hector, eagerly, "for I was just thinking how much larger that cloud of steam looks, that rises from the kettle, than all the water inside would look, if we could see it."

"Well, Hector, my boy, that very expansive quality of steam, upon which you have been remarking, is the great cause of its extreme usefulness to us. The whole force and power of steam results from its being compressed into a space disproportioned to its own bulk."

"Compressed, uncle?" repeated Flora, looking half amused, and half puzzled, by her uncle's expression, "how funny it seems to speak of compressing steam, for it is so very delicate a thing, and so soon disappears, that one can scarcely imagine how it can be *caught* at all."

"It very soon disappears when it is exposed to the air, I admit," returned her uncle, "but that is because the coolness of the air restores the attraction of aggregation, and reduces it again to the compound substance of water. Hold that cold plate above the steam for a few minutes, and see the result."

Flora held a china plate immediately over the cloud of steam, and then, at her uncle's desire, she turned it with its face upwards to examine the effects. The plate was covered with a sort of dew, and the water hung in pretty large drops in different places.

"You see that the steam coming in contact with the cold plate, the cold has restored the aggregation which the heat had destroyed, and returned it to its original state," said her uncle. "Steam is in itself both dry and transparent; it is only when it mixes with the air, and becomes in some degree cooled and condensed, that it takes that cloudy appearance. If you will examine the steam when it first issues from the spout of the tea-kettle, quite close to the opening, before the cold air has begun to act upon it, you will find that it is not even visible to you—you cannot discover it till it has made some progress in its way from the kettle; and if it were always confined in close vessels, like that kettle, without any spouts at all,

it would not assume that opaque appearance at all —it would not, of course, be able to disperse itself."

"And that is the reason, then," said Flora, "that they make use of those great boilers for steam engines, that they may hold the steam fast, and compress it."

"Exactly," answered her uncle; "and the tremendous strength of those boilers will not surprise you, when you learn the expansion which water undergoes in its transformation into steam, being not less than seventeen hundred degrees."

"Seventeen hundred!" exclaimed half a dozen voices, variously modulated to different tones of surprise.

"Yes," continued Mr. Mackenzie, "or to make it still more distinct, one cubic inch of water;—can you tell me what a *cubic* inch is, Hector?"

"Yes, uncle; anything that measures an inch *every* way," returned Hector, very promptly.

"Well, a cubic inch of water, when turned into steam, becomes very nearly a cubic foot! Now, supposing a vessel to contain three cubic feet of water, and one cubic foot of empty space, and the water to be made to boil, so as that the process of *vaporization*, or turning into steam, commenced; by the time *one inch* of the water had been turned into steam, the whole of the empty space would

be filled up; and by the time all the remaining water had undergone the same process, the whole three feet of steam would be contained in what was only fit to contain four inches, or one inch for every foot of water. You may imagine the tremendous force of the steam in this case, and the degree of pressure which it is capable of sustaining. Indeed this capability is so great, that its extent has never been ascertained, and so we have never been able to assign any limits to the power of steam, or to the wonders which it may achieve. Do you all understand this explanation?"

"Oh! yes, uncle," said Roderick, "perfectly;" and Kenneth also added his assurance, that it was perfectly intelligible; but Flora, who had long since got over the foolish pride, which prefers remaining in ignorance to condescending to ask for an explanation, declared that her uncle's statements had puzzled her extremely.

"I do not understand anything you said after that about steam being seventeen hundred times the bulk of water," said she; "I cannot understand that about the *cubic* feet, it sounds so *mathematick-ish*;" and poor Flora gave a look of disgust and despair, which produced a general titter.

"Well, my dear Flo', I will try and make it clearer to you," said her uncle; "and, believe me

I am too happy to see you determined to acquire information, even at the expense of showing your present ignorance, to find any fault with your dislike of scientific phrases. Well, then, to banish the cubic feet, suppose that kettle contained three tea-cupsful of boiling water, and that there was just empty space enough left to contain one tea-cupful besides; and supposing that there were as much as twelve spoonsful in each tea-cup;—as soon as one spoonful, that is, just a twelfth part of one tea-cup, were converted into steam, the whole of the empty space would be filled up, because one tea-cupful of water, supposing it to contain twelve spoonsful, takes up no more room than one tea-spoonful of water, after it is converted into steam. Now, don't you perceive the extreme pressure it must require when the whole of the rest of the steam—the steam of all the water in the kettle—is contained in the space already filled by one spoonful?"

"Oh! yes, yes, I see quite well now," answered Flora, "but I should think it would soon burst the tea-kettle, if you were to close up the spout, and make it all prisoner."

"That it would, my Flora," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "that is a degree of pressure capable of bursting the strongest boilers that have ever been invented; and yet we have not yet arrived at

one-half the degree of power which would be obtained by our tea-kettle of water by the time it was entirely converted into steam; for when the steam is confined in a vessel in which there is more steam generating, its elastic force is prodigiously increased, partly by the heat continually added to it, and partly by the perpetual increase of density."

"But, uncle," asked Roderick, in a thoughtful tone, "does not this great power of heat upon the steam, destroy the *other* power of attraction, I mean the *affinity*, and reduce the water at last into its component parts?"

"No, my dear boy," returned his uncle; "no ordinary degree of heat that we can apply is of force sufficient to separate the compound of oxygen and hydrogen, which produce water: that is more easily done, by making use of the attraction which may exist in one or other of them for some other substance *stronger* than that which unites them to each other, and so drawing one of them off, and leaving the other free. This is effected with great pains and delicacy in chemical science, but it is an operation perpetually carried on throughout the whole arcana of nature; and indeed one substance acts so continually upon another, and the connection subsisting between bodies is so varied and complicated, that nothing but accident

or, at most, the unexpected results of experiments, could have put us in possession of one half of them. You have often heard the story of the first discovery of glass, by a party of shipwrecked voyagers, who kindled a fire upon the sand with dried kelp, and in the morning, when the embers were cold, discovered that the soda contained in the sea-weed, and the peculiar siliceous nature of the sand, had combined, through the action of the heat, to produce that beautiful and invaluable substance which is now in universal and daily use."

"Oh! how pretty!—how clever!" exclaimed little Evelyn. "Oh! papa, what a much nicer way of discovering things, than by boring with hard words, and dry books. What a nice way this would be, to let things come out of their own accord."

"How like a silly child, my poor little Evie talks," said her papa, smiling. "If the inventions of science, and the improvements of art, were abolished, of what use do you think all the valuable things would be which are discovered to us by accident? Suppose you were standing upon a rock, overlooking the sea, and watching the coming in of a ship that was bringing mamma, or me, or Flora, or Kenneth, from a foreign country, and a wreck had been pointed out to you, floating on the surface of the water, which you were told

was the very ship for which you were so anxiously watching: suppose that, in the midst of your fever of anxiety and curiosity, some one were to approach with a handful of sea-weed from the rock, and a handful of sand from the beach, and were to say to you, 'Here, mingle these two together, and apply them to your eyes, and you will be satisfied in a moment*.' How far would you, in such a case as that, be benefited by the discovery of the shipwrecked merchants? And yet these, if properly prepared, and modified, and transformed by human arts, would in reality supply you with the telescope, which would have the power to set all your doubts at rest."

"And yet, uncle," said Roderick, after Evelyn's blush had passed into a smile, "I do not think the operations of art and human invention are nearly so interesting as the discoveries which philosophical and scientific people make of the wonders of nature. There is a delicacy and minuteness in the regularity of all natural productions which is quite out of the question in anything mechanical."

"That is very true, my dear Roderick," answered his uncle; "the beautiful exactitude of all the operations of nature, the regularity of the process, and the certainty of the results, form the

* See *Readings in Science*, p. 217.

of Geology, to introduce it at the close of an evening, that had been already expended in discussions on boiling tea-kettles; so if you please, mistress Flora, sit down and play me the new overture."

CHAPTER III.

A NEW ACQUAINTANCE,—SHOWING HOW PREJUDICES MAY BE INDULGED AT THE EXPENSE OF JUSTICE AND PRUDENCE.

It was about the middle of August, when the holidays commenced, and Flora and her brothers had been almost three months at Glenlee. Even in that short time, it was wonderful to see how much Flora had improved under her kind aunt's judicious management; and how the good points in her character had expanded and shone out by degrees, while its faults and imperfections seemed to recede out of view. She was, as you will have begun, I dare say, to find out for ourselves, a very acute and clever little person: and at the school, where she had been placed by her father, she had acquired such habits of industry and application, that there were very few things in the way of study or acquirement, which, if she set her mind upon mastering them, she would not speedily overcome. The consequence was, that she possessed acquirements not at all common to a child of her age; and had surmounted all the first difficulties of them, when other children would just have been entering upon the drudgery.

It must be confessed, that when she came first

to Glenlee, she had looked upon these acquirements as of no value, except so far as they made her admired, or praised, or gave her a superiority over other little people, who were running the same race with herself. She had no notion of that *love* of knowledge for its own sake, which makes the pleasure of surmounting a difficulty, or of solving a hard question, quite reward enough in itself, for all the trouble it has cost us, without any reference to the honour or the praise it may bring us afterwards. And of course, being unconscious of the highest and truest enjoyment of knowledge, it followed, that Flora should be quite unable to judge which department of it was the most valuable, and the most worth pursuing.

She had not been long at Glenlee, however, before her views of these matters were very much enlightened; and, not having any long class of school-fellows older than herself, with whom it could excite her ambition or fire her vanity to compete, she began to feel that the discovery of truths, either in science or in art, of which before she had been ignorant, or the interest of following out some simple process in nature, which had never before been pointed out to her; or the making acquaintance with some great historical character or event, to which her attention had never been directed, was to the full as interesting

and delightful as practising over and over a difficult piece of music till the difficulties vanished, or in spoiling sheet after sheet of drawing-paper till she should master an intricate point in perspective.

Mrs. Mackenzie took care to show her, however, that the acquisition of arts so beautiful as those of music and drawing, was a most important and proper use to which she might apply the talents which God had given her. At the same time teaching her, that the real and natural use of those accomplishments, was to fill up sweetly and profitably the hours of domestic leisure, to improve her own taste and intellect by giving an improving occupation to both; and to provide an hour or two of pleasant amusement for those with whom she lived, and to whom she was indebted for benefits so much more important. Thus the reformation of Flora's mental soil was in a very fair way of progression, while her aunt applied herself to the task of exterminating from her *heart* the numerous little weeds and briers, which were of a much more obstinate and dangerous growth.

Flora had all her life been so accustomed to success in everything, that the sensation of diffidence or timidity was unknown to her. She always *had* found her powers of mind equal to

anything she had attempted; and, therefore, she would have considered the humility of thinking, "I am afraid I am not clever enough to do that," or, "I suspect that is more than I am able to manage," as mere cowardice or indolence. And so far, my dear children, I am quite sure she was right, that nothing ought to be considered too difficult for us to *attempt;* because, a hundred unsuccessful trials cannot be considered as time or trouble wasted, if we succeed at last; and patience and application will overcome infinitely greater difficulties, than the highest degree of talent will ever do without them. But there is a danger that this extreme self-confidence may sometimes degenerate into pride; I do not mean that sort of pride which gives rise to vanity, because Flora's vanity, I must confess, was very soon put to flight by the good-humoured raillery of her uncle, and her aunt's gentle training. But she still gave signs very often, I am sorry to say, of that disposition to haughtiness, which could not brook the possibility of being excelled or outshone; and which transformed every one with whom she came in contact into a rival, over whom her peace of mind demanded that she should obtain a superiority. Now I need not tell you, my dear children, that even in a man, this is a disposition which must be indulged under great re-

strictions, and tempered by the utmost kindliness and good-will towards those against whom he is striving; otherwise, it is sure to occasion enmity and ill-will, and to choke up all the good and generous feelings of the heart: while, in a woman, it is altogether inappropriate and unbecoming. I do not mean to say, that girls ought not to feel themselves as much called upon to make honourable exertions as boys; nor that they can be expected to derive less pleasure from success, or to experience the mortification of failure in a much inferior degree: but then, the *motives* which lead a girl on to make these exertions, ought to be of a totally different nature from those which actuate a boy. Let me just explain the thing to you a little further, and then tell me, my dear little girls, whether I am not speaking the truth, and whether you do not agree with me in everything.

When one hears of a boy distinguishing himself at school, taking all the prizes, and outstripping his companions in the various branches of study in which they may compete,—one naturally expects that that boy will make what is called a great man; that is, he will probably rise to eminence in the profession he chooses; or will get into Parliament, and make long speeches, and improve the condition of the country, by exercising his talents to benefit it; or will enter the army, and become a distinguished officer, and

help to win great victories; or he will do something else equally great and useful to the world, which could not be done, unless he possessed the sort of ambition which I am trying to describe.

But if, on the other hand, we hear of a girl, who has been very successful at school, who has been a good player, a good drawer and dancer, who has talked and read a great many languages prettily, and stored her mind with useful and elegant information, and done a great deal of beautiful work, and altogether turned out a graceful and highly cultivated woman,—why, you know, *she* can't go into Parliament and make speeches; *she* can't become a clergyman, or a soldier, or a barrister; and, in short, she cannot do any *public* good of any description whatever; and if she could, it would seem to us so unnatural, that we should forget all about her talents, and look upon her just as a bold masculine disagreeable person.

Well then, my dear children, what should we expect from her instead? *where* is it that a girl's talents are to exercise their influence, because, you know, all talents are given to be used, and a woman's must have their sphere of action, as well as a man's. Well, is it not *at home* that we look for them to appear? If a girl has been distinguished for the number and variety of her acquirements, do we not expect that they will show

themselves in every department of her home—of her father's and mother's home before she is married, and of her husband's afterwards? There is scope almost unlimited for triumphs of the most brilliant description in a woman's sphere of action;—far more, in my opinion, than in a man's; because, a man can only be praised and admired, can only do things to make people wonder; while a woman does what makes her loved and thanked, and what makes every body bless her and seek her society, to make them happy and contented.

For instance, a man may have to invent new laws, or to improve upon old ones, that the affairs of the nation may not get into disorder. But a woman has to use her invention, to regulate the domestic concerns of those she loves best; to make her orders to the servants of such a kind, as will prevent every thing like confusion or irregularity from arising; and then, when she finds all these matters go smooth and gracefully, I think she must feel a much greater degree of happiness, than the great legislator, when he restores peace to a refractory province. The statesman, in all probability, only *hears* of the effects of his wise arrangements; the lady of the household sees and feels the success of hers in the comfort and enjoyment of every one about her. In the same way, a great general has thousands of men to command,

and great manœuvres to plan and execute; and a lady has a whole circle of tempers and dispositions to manage. She has to show her skill in the different treatment of each,—in the tact and nicety with which she leads every individual member of her family circle to play his proper part in it; or, if this be impracticable, to prevent the enjoyment and harmony of the whole from being spoiled by his waywardness. She has to exercise her influence perpetually—constantly, without any more intermission than the great general in his camp,—to ward off every disagreeable or unfortunate circumstance which could occur, to disturb the happiness of her circle; or, if such circumstances do occur, to repair their effects by her skill and kindness. And, I am sure, you will allow that here her triumphs must be the more valuable of the two, since nothing is ever mingled with her success which can impair the pleasure it affords, or turn it into pain and sorrow, such as must always attend upon the general's victories.

The home of a clever woman, who fulfils all her duties, is a place where weariness or languor must be for ever unknown. She is able in herself to furnish a ceaseless flow of interest or amusement. Her music, her drawing, her reading, or her sprightly and intelligent conversation, can never fail, under proper management, to make the

social hours pass agreeably; nor, when strangers resort to her home, to render it to them the scene of untiring enjoyment. Tell me, then, my dear children, are not the fatiguing, tiresome, wearing-out duties, through which a man toils to work out his success, greatly less enviable than the pleasant, cheering, interesting labours of a woman, who has no object in life except to make those she loves best, happy, and whose own happiness is perpetually supplied by the success of her endeavours.

I am afraid you will think I have forgotten Flora altogether; but I am just about to return to her, as soon as I have pointed out to you the proper inference to be drawn from this long discussion of a woman's sphere of excellence. We began, you know, by trying to prove, that girls ought not to desire success or distinction for the mere gratification of their ambition, or the little vanity of outstripping their companions; neither ought they to value these things, as men may be allowed to do, for the *general* effect which they may produce. Nothing is more disagreeable than a woman who hunts after popular applause. A woman's talents are valuable in proportion as they make her more wise in herself; more capable of giving advice or encouragement; more able to teach and train little intellects; more gentle, and kind, and judicious; more *loveable*, and better qualified to

shed the atmosphere of affection and kindly feeling around her. And if she is all this, she is almost equally certain to be admired and caressed in society, in a degree which will satisfy all her desires for homage of that kind. And, I assure you, that even the wish to be admired is amiable, if it spring from a desire indirectly to please those who love, and take a pride and an interest in us.

Flora had not yet arrived at that degree of gentle and womanly wisdom, which would have led her to place its proper value on every advantage which she had obtained over her fellows. She was still too apt to esteem victory for its *own* sake; and in most of the concerns of life she delighted in success, rather because of the feeling of superiority it gave her, than from any other more exalted result which it could bring about.

With such a companion and schoolfellow as little Evelyn, Flora was not likely to find much opportunity either for the exercise of her ambition, or for its gratification; for Evelyn would almost as soon have thought of disputing the palm of superiority in one of their studies with her own mamma as with Flora. Her cousin's pre-eminence was always in her eyes so entirely a matter of course, that Flora soon lost the idea of

rivalship with Evelyn altogether, and Mrs. Mackenzie felt inclined to hope, that by keeping the excitement of competition as much as possible out of view, Flora might, in the lapse of time, wear out of the habit of this pernicious thirst for ascendancy, since there was no ground in her present situation on which it could be met and resisted.

Evelyn's extreme humility, on the other hand, was calculated to excite apprehensions of a different kind; for though the absolute sweetness and submission with which she ranked herself upon all occasions beneath every one else, never failed to secure affection and regard, and, in Flora's case, formed the strongest tie that bound them together, and awakened all the enthusiasm of her nature to cherish, and assure, and encourage her meek little cousin,—still this excessive diffidence was so closely allied to the principal defect in Evelyn's character, namely, its timidity and want of firmness, that the indulgence of the one could not fail to promote the growth of the other; and Evelyn was often deprived of the opportunity, both of proving where she did excel, and of attaining excellence where she did not, by that very modesty which prevented her from making the attempt. A circumstance occurred just about this time at Glenlee, which will quite well illus-

trate what I wish you, my dear children, to understand.

You must know then, in the first place, that Lady Ruthven, Kenneth's friend and admirer, was a widow lady, with four children, of whom only one was a girl,—and she had been placed by her mother in a boarding-school in Germany, very shortly after her papa died, when her mamma had come to live at Ardvaigh.

Lady Ruthven's eldest son, the young Lord Ruthven, was a youth of nineteen, and an officer in the Guards, so that he very seldom came to Ardvaigh; and when he did, it was only for a few days, just to see his mamma and go off again: and the Lady Augusta, Lady Ruthven's only little girl, had never been at Ardvaigh at all since her mamma came to live there, so that Evelyn had never seen her. And poor Lady Ruthven would have been quite alone but for the society of her two younger boys, Algernon and William, the elder of whom had left school on account of bad health, and was now studying with Roderick and Kenneth under Mr. Stewart; while little Willie, a beautiful fair-haired boy of five years old, was still too young to learn anything except from his mamma, and accordingly remained her faithful friend and darling, while all the others wandered about in search of their various occupations.

This midsummer, however, it happened that the young Lady Augusta was expected at home for the holidays; and as the period drew near which had been fixed for her arrival, a great deal of curiosity and expectation was excited in our own misses at Glenlee, as to what sort of person their new acquaintance was likely to turn out.

It was no longer a formidable consideration to Evelyn, the prospect of receiving a young stranger of her own age. Now that she had Flora to take the lead for her; now that she had nothing to do but to meet the advances of another; no duties of reception to go through; no responsibilities of her own; nothing at all but to take refuge behind Flora, and to follow in her footsteps;—all the pleasureable part of the prospect was foremost in her view; and so great a novelty was it, both to Flora and Evelyn, to have a companion of their own age, that for a week before the arrival of the Lady Augusta nothing else was spoken of amidst our holiday circle at Glenlee except her coming.

"I know she will be very proud," was Flora's characteristic speculation; "I know she will be very vain of her title, and all that; and because she has been educated abroad she will quite look down upon our poor acquirements: but I am quite determined, Evie, that you and I are not to be eclipsed. I am resolved to show her little

ladyship, that people who have no titles, and who have never been out of their own country, can be just as clever and as accomplished as those who have. Now recollect, Evie, I charge you not to allow her to patronise you."

"But, dear Flo', I think it will be very kind of her to patronise me; and, indeed, I do not know how I am to help it if she does, because I shall feel so much obliged to her," answered Evelyn, with a very simple and puzzled look.

"Obliged, forsooth!" said Flora, tossing her little head till all its curls fell down, "I declare, Evie, I don't think I shall ever make anything of you. Is it possible that you really mean to be silly and tame enough to allow this Lady Augusta to queen it over you with her Continental airs and graces! I warn you, that if you do I will scold you heartily."

"Do you make it a general rule, Flo', to connect overbearing manners with the idea of a title?" asked Mrs. Mackenzie, with a very funny smile.

"Oh! no, aunt," exclaimed Flora; "my own dear mamma, you know, had a title, and hers were the sweetest and gentlest manners I ever saw."

"What! then you have heard that little Lady Augusta Ruthven is particularly vain of hers, I suppose," said her aunt, with a look which Flora

did not know very well whether to consider in jest or earnest.

"No, no, I have never *heard*," answered she, "but——."

"Oh! you consider arrogance and self-conceit the inevitable consequence of living on the Continent! Poor Lady Augusta! How cruel it was to subject her to such a misfortune," pursued Mrs. Mackenzie, in a tone of compassion.

Flora laughed and blushed a little.

"I know you are only laughing at me, aunt," said she, in a very good-humoured tone, "but I am determined to be *very* careful before I make advances to Lady Augusta; because nothing could ever make amends to me for the mortification of finding, that she held our manners and our studies in contempt. You know, auntie, you have often said, that it is a good thing to choose our friends discreetly, and not to be too hasty in bestowing our affections."

"Yes, my Flora," answered her aunt, "but I do not think I ever gave you reason to suppose I should approve your meeting a young acquaintance with such a strong prejudice against her, that every word and look of hers is liable to be misinterpreted. Nothing short of a miracle could enable any one to make a good impression under such disadvantages as these; and unless you try

to receive the Lady Augusta with feelings a little more inclined to cordiality, you are most likely to dislike one another from the beginning."

I do not know what good effect Mrs. Mackenzie's advice might have produced if Flora had found time to discuss the matter at full length; but it happened, that just as the last words were pronounced, Lady Ruthven's carriage drove up to the door, and in a minute or two she, and the little Lady Augusta, walked into the drawing-room; while Flora coloured violently at the coincidence which had brought the very subject of their conversation to interrupt it.

Mrs. Mackenzie received her visitors, as she always did, with great kindness and attention; and as the young lady formed at present the point of attraction, the general notice was for a while devoted to her alone. She was a tall girl, something taller than Flora, though it turned out that she was a few weeks younger, but so extremely thin and slender as to mislead the eye regarding her actual height, and make her appear much taller. Her complexion was very dark and sallow, and her face long and thin, with an appearance of delicate health. On the other hand, her features were beautifully regular; and when a tinge of colour came into her cheek it seemed to change her whole appearance; while the large grey eyes, despite of the dark halo

that overspread the lids and seemed to reach half-way down the worn-looking little cheeks, appeared to glow with intelligence. She was dressed quite like a little foreigner, with a dark silk jacket buttoned close to her throat; and her hair, which was of a peculiar blackness, was folded close round her head, and glittered and shone as if it had been a covering of rich satin.

Flora made all these observations in far less time than I have taken to write them, and the conclusion to which they brought her was this, —that Lady Augusta Ruthven might be, and indeed most likely *was*, as proud and prouder than she had expected to find her; but that, at least, she was not likely to dazzle either her or Evelyn by any display of airs and graces, either '*Continental*' or otherwise. She sat on a low seat near her mother, answering all the questions put to her with perfect good-breeding, but apparently quite as much engrossed by scrutinising her companions as they were in examining her; and as she turned her great eyes first on one and then on the other, watching the proud bright colour that went and came in Flora's round little cheek, and the gentle meek-looking paleness of Evelyn's, without relaxing her own gravity to bestow a smile upon either, an older judge than Flo' might have been puzzled to determine, since

the expression of her face clearly did not indicate stupidity, whether it was pride or shyness which rested in it.

"Were you happy at school, Lady Augusta?" asked Mrs. Mackenzie; "did you like living in Germany with Madame Steinlein?"

"Oh no, not at all," answered the young lady; and Flora remarked a strong foreign accent in her words; "I liked Madame Steinlein very much, but I was not at all happy in Germany."

"Then you would rather not return, I suppose?" continued Mrs. Mackenzie, smiling kindly, "you would prefer living always with your dear mamma?"

The child clasped her mother's hand firmly, and a soft crimson flush passed over her face, as if she assented to Mrs. Mackenzie's remark more cordially than her words could express.

"Oh! we are very home-sick folks, I am afraid," said Lady Ruthven, as she returned her little girl's caress. "I really do not know how we are ever to say good-by again at all."

"Well, I think we must all use our endeavours to persuade mamma, that good-by need not be spoken again," continued Mrs. Mackenzie, very kindly, and much interested by the affectionate manner of her young guest; "that you will be far better, and far happier, if she will keep you

beside her always at Ardvaigh, than you have been even with good Madame Steinlein."

"At Ardvaigh!" repeated the little Lady Augusta, with a curl of the lip, which carried conviction of her disdain of Scotland to the mind of Flora. "I do not want to stay at Ardvaigh, I would almost as soon go back to Germany as stay at Ardvaigh!"

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Mackenzie, "I thought you desired only to be with your mamma."

"I do desire nothing so much as to be with my mamma;" and she turned her eyes again, glistening with affection, upon her mother's face: "but I wish to be with her at Oakwood, where I was born, where I lived always with my papa, and where she says she spent the happiest days of her life."

"Well, that is a very natural and innocent wish of yours, my love," said Mrs. Mackenzie; "but if it should be inconvenient or disagreeable to your mamma to remove to Oakwood at present, don't you think it would be very sweet, if through your influence Ardvaigh could be made as happy a residence to her?"

"No influence could ever make Ardvaigh so happy a residence as Oakwood to mamma, and nothing could ever make it otherwise than disagreeable to me," answered the young patrician,

with the composure of one who was not much accustomed to weigh either her own opinions or those of other people.

"Come, dear Augusta, do not let us talk of Oakwood just now," said her mother in a cheerful tone; "you condemn poor Ardvaigh before you have had time to judge of it. Only look out of that window, and tell me if there is anything more beautiful at Oakwood than you can see there; you do not yet know half the beauties that surround you in the Highlands."

The view to which Lady Ruthven pointed, was that lovely picture of the lawn, with its glades and alleys, and its masses of flowering shrubs, which had struck Flora's good taste so much on her first introduction to it. It had lost none of its beauty by the change of season, for all the rich summer flowers were in blossom, and the beds, and the shrubbery, and the creeping plants that were twining everywhere, had become greatly more luxuriant in consequence.

Lady Augusta looked in the direction pointed out to her for a few minutes without speaking, and Mrs. Mackenzie proposed that she should make a closer acquaintance with the lawn, in the society of Flora and Evelyn.

"Will you go, mamma?" asked the youn stranger.

"No, dearest, I have something to talk to Mrs. Mackenzie about," replied her mother.

"Would you rather that I did not hear?"

"No, my dear child, not at all; it is only about good Mrs. Buchanan's card."

"Then, if you please, I would rather stay with you," said the Lady Augusta; and she seated herself again on her hassock, without turning to look at her proffered companions.

Flora felt extremely indignant at what she considered an ostentatious display of hostility from one whom she had supposed more likely to lavish unwished for notice and condescension upon her rustic neighbours; she would not have made the slightest advance towards further acquaintance for the world; such another repulse would have been more than her pride could bear, and she sat quite immoveable, the very picture of coldness and reserve.

Strange to say, the young Lady Augusta's indifference of manner produced the directly contrary effect upon little Evelyn. Her courage rose in exact proportion to the freedom which she felt from all *necessity* to put it to the test, and, as often happens with very timid people, she could make advances of her own accord, from which she would have shrunk with terror if they had been proposed to her. Accordingly,

a few moments after Lady Augusta's refusal to go with them to the garden, Evie went over to the sofa, where, on a cushion which had been expressly wrought for him, reposed Floss, a beautiful little black spaniel belonging to Flora, which we introduced to you, little readers, the first night of his arrival at Glenlee, and which we have most uncivilly neglected ever since. He was a lovely little fellow, with long silky curls, twining in every direction, liquid black eyes, and ears that just escaped the ground.

"Are you fond of dogs?" asked Evie, when she had roused the dog from his sleep, and sent him to Lady Augusta to be admired, "because if you are, Flossy dearly loves to be petted, and perhaps you would like to make acquaintance with him. Papa says he is a very handsome dog."

The little Lady Augusta coloured very much at Evie's first advance, but she met it with a smile of great sweetness, and took Floss in her arms and petted him, and seemed quite enchanted with his beauty.

Flora was surprised,—"If she is fond of dogs she cannot help liking Flossy; if she could, she would refuse his acquaintance too," was her mental commentary on this new symptom. Floss was Flora's passion,—she could not suppose pride itself capable of resisting him; but in a few

minutes, her amazement was excited anew, by remarking, that as soon as she had turned round his collar, and read the name inscribed upon it, Floss's new friend laid him down with great coolness upon the ground, as if she had completely satisfied her desire of cultivating his friendship.

While Flora was deciding on the propriety of considering this a personal insult, Evie had resumed her approaches toward intimacy with her singular guest.

"Perhaps you might like to look at my dove," said she, in a more courageous tone; "it is the daughter of Mrs. Buchanan's dove, you know, and I dare say you will think it a very pretty one."

"Thank you, I should like very much to see it; but I don't like to give you the trouble of going for it," answered the little lady, in a tone of unabated civility and kindness.

"I shall not have to go any further than the window," said Evie, with a smile of delight; "that is the great beauty of my dove, that it is so tame; I dare say you never saw a bird so tame before: if you will come to the window you shall see;" and with perfect good will and alacrity Lady Augusta left the seat beside her mother, and followed Evelyn to the open sashes.

Evie stepped out, and first calling to Margery,

who was seated close to the window above, she bade her unfasten the door of the dove's cage, and after she had clapped her hands and called "Una, Una," once or twice, with two or three endearing names, the bird flew down and perched upon her shoulder to the infinite delight of the looker on.

"What a lovely creature! what a dear affectionate bird," said Lady Augusta, as she smoothed down the silken feathers, and caressed the pretty head without causing the smallest alarm in the favourite. "How have you managed to make it so tame? and how can you allow it to fly even this distance in the open air without being afraid? I think I should break my heart if it were to forsake me."

"Oh! I should not be at all afraid to trust it now, because it loves us all so very much," answered Evie; "but I should not have been able to teach it at all, if it had not been for Flora's clever plan of the little chain," and she displayed the delicate little wrought collar, and the tiny chain of gold that was fastened to the bird's foot, at the same time detailing all the circumstances that had made her pretty Una a solitary, and the delightful surprise prepared for her by Flo' on her birth-day, when the pet had appeared for the first time in its pretty trappings.

Again, to Flora's infinite surprise, the whole

interest formerly expressed in the dove vanished, and the Lady Augusta stepped within the drawing-room again, and returned to her seat; it occurred to Flo', at last, that her little ladyship might be offended by her impenetrable silence; and for the vindication of her own good-breeding she exerted herself to ask a question.

"Have you any pets of your own, Lady Augusta?" The little girl gave a slight start as Flora's question reached her ear, and then she coloured so violently, as almost to bring the tears to her eyes; at the same time exerting herself to reply with a tone of indifference.

"I have no *little* pets, I have nothing but a horse that belonged to my papa, when it was quite a young thing; I have never mounted it yet."

"Are you fond of riding?" continued Flora.

"No! I never rode, except in a ring covered with sawdust; I thought it very disagreeable."

Flo' had never taken lessons in riding, so no more was said on that subject. But a little opening having been made, which led to the subject of studies, Flora very soon improved it into a conversation. "Were the same things taught at a German boarding-school and an English one?" a *London* one, as Flo' took care to particularize. "Were the German masters very strict?" "Did they give marks and prizes, the same as in England?"

and many more such questions opened the conversation, which, it must be confessed, was carried on with extreme caution and reserve on both sides. At last, came the grand question: "Was Lady Augusta musical, and how many hours a day had she practised?"

"I like it well enough!" was the somewhat matter of fact reply; "but I practised all day long for six weeks, without doing anything else; and it made me so ill, that I have never been quite so fond of it since."

"All day long! all day long!" Flora could not take in the novelty of the idea. Her own six hours a day sank into nothing immediately; "All day long!" there was nothing for it, but to disapprove the expenditure of time?

"And what became of your French, and Italian, and drawing, and history, all the time?"

"Why, Madame Steinlein considered that my other studies would suffer less interruption, by being thrown aside entirely, till I had mastered the first difficulties, than if they were constantly broken in upon by so many hours, as would be necessary without. She considered half the day scarcely enough to acquire a good touch, and a good position at the harp."

"The harp!" Flora was dumb immediately.

That instrument which had been the object of

her highest ambition, ever since she could play at all, to have been so very nearly mastered by her little rival, as it must have been in six weeks entirely devoted to it; while she had not as yet been allowed even to possess one, and was expressly debarred from attempting it before she approached her womanhood. It was too provoking: she longed to know the extent of the Lady Augusta's proficiency on the piano, but she could not bring herself to inquire. The piano seemed so humble and commonplace an instrument, in comparison with the harp, that she would have blushed to attach the smallest importance to it. She wondered whether Lady Augusta had declared her knowledge of the harp, only for the sake of display; a little secret whisper at the bottom of Flora's own heart, made her very suspicious of others, on a similar occasion. She looked hard at her young visitor, but nothing could be gathered from the study of her countenance. The large eyes looked with the same straightforward glance of proud indifference, and before Flora had satisfied herself upon the question at issue, Lady Rathven had risen to take leave, and in a very few moments this important first interview was over.

"Well, mamma, what do you think of her?" said little Evie, in an eager voice, as soon as the carriage had disappeared. "What do you think of Lady Augusta?"

"Nay, my Evie, what do *you* think of her?" said her mamma, with a smile; "you had much more of her society than I had."

"Why, I did not like her very much, mamma!" answered Evelyn; "she was so grave and silent, but yet I liked her, because I thought she looked as if she had been either not very well, or not very happy; don't you think she did, mamma?"

"Yes, dear, I thought she bore the traces of both mental and physical depression; I think she is not at all a commonplace little person," answered Mrs. Mackenzie.

"What then, aunt; you consider her a genius I suppose!" exclaimed Flora, in a very jealous tone. "Certainly, if she is one, her talents do not lie in the way of talking."

"It struck me, that my Flora herself did not show much accomplishment in the art of conversation," said Mrs. Mackenzie, smiling. "You were a long time before you could summon up anything to say to each other at all."

"And yet, Flo', you needed not have been afraid that she would patronize either of us, you see," said little Evelyn, laughing; "for certainly she did not seem at all inclined to do that."

"Humph!" was Flora's somewhat cross rejoinder; "perhaps it was because she did not think it worth while."

The card from Mrs. Buchanan, which Lady Ruthven had mentioned as forming the subject of her business with Mrs. Mackenzie, was one which the former had been requested to deliver by the old lady, at whose house she had called on her way to Glenlee. Its contents were to request Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie to bring the little people to her house on an early day, which she had fixed for a pretty little fête to be given in honour of the assembling of all her young friends for the holidays. It was to be the most charming little party that ever was given; they were to dine on the lawn, and all their sports and plays were to be carried on under the trees; and, in short, there was a general impression, that in the hands of Mrs. Buchanan, when she engaged to cater for it, the enjoyment of the whole community was secure.

As might be expected, the invitation created a prodigious excitement in the household at Glenlee. It was usually so quiet and secluded a neighbourhood, that a little party of this kind could scarcely have been made up on any former season; but the circle of little people having extended to such a degree of late, plenty of young company might now be found to fill Mrs. Buchanan's largest dinner-tables. There were only a few days to wait, for the good old lady was too well acquainted with the way to please her party, to extend the

season of anticipation too long; and to provide against all disappointments, if the day was wet or threatening, the preparations were to be made within doors.

The prospect of dining with a large party in the open air, however, was too great a novelty to be looked upon with indifference, and many an anxious eye cast upon the clouds, and many an eager inquiry as to the direction of the wind, and the changing of the moon, declared the importance of fine weather to the fulfilment of the general anticipation.

Contrary, however, to all former experience—which it is said goes to prove fête days the stormiest in the calendar—the morning of our hopes rose in a glow of magnificent sunshine; and by twelve o'clock, the happiest party that ever set out on a day of pleasure, might be found driving along the side of the loch, in Mr. Mackenzie's carriage, towards the house of their kind old hostess.

The drive was one of nearly an hour long, and throughout the whole of the time it occupied, one might have found amusement in tracing out the different expressions of each happy face in its turn. Flora's was by many degrees the most thoughtful; she had taken particular care of her toilette this morning, more than Margery had ever before seen her expend upon it; and some very

beautiful little Indian ornaments, a gift from her papa, had been drawn for the first time from their covers for the decoration of her neck and her forehead. She looked as nice as possible in her bright green dress, and her gold ornaments, one of which held back the dark curls which had been brushed by Margery with unusual nicety; altogether, Flora might be called a very elegant little girl: while little Evie, in her white muslin frock, and her bunch of flowers, looked as gay as a little flower herself, and as innocent. But Flora had not the smallest love of finery; I must not allow you, my dear children, to suspect her of so silly a propensity as that; her desire to shine this important day, even in her dress, was attributable to an entirely different motive.

"Well, Flo', you are resolved that no Lady Augusta shall eclipse you, I perceive!" said Kenneth, in his usual careless and rattling tone.

But Flo' was not in a humour to be quizzed with impunity, and when she did use her powers of quizzing in return, master Kenneth occasionally found her a match for him.

"I am determined she shall not be *caricatured*, at least," answered she, with a demure smile; and Kenneth's wit was silenced on that subject, while his papa gave his warm approbation to the repartee.

At last, the party arrived at its destination, and

no sight could be imagined more likely to gratify and enhance the excitement with which it was first beheld by our group, than that presented on the lawn which surrounded Mrs. Buchanan's house. The house itself was placed very low, quite in a little valley, and the lawn was rather an extensive plain for a hilly country like that of Strathlee; so there was plenty of space upon the grass, for all the gay-looking preparations that had been made.

Good Mrs. Buchanan had been a long time preparing her little fête, though the children had not been allowed to know of it till very lately; and as she was quite rich enough to afford to be generous, all her plans were on a large scale. The grass was rolled as smooth as velvet, and at intervals, all over it, there were little gay-coloured flags planted in the ground, each with some pretty motto or device painted on it. And there were one or two beautiful tents, made, one of scarlet, one of blue, and one of yellow cloth; and there were little tables with fruit and cakes, under all the trees; and at the farthest-off end of the lawn, there was a little row of booths, such as one sees at a fair; only these were made of green boughs, and twined about with heather, and looked so gay and pretty, that the children were in a fidget to know for what they could be intended. In the middle of the lawn, a band of musicians was

stationed, and immediately in front of them, a nice large space had been cleared by planting stakes in the ground, and fastening a cord to the heads of them, which formed the most tempting and fairy looking ball-room in the world. There never was a prettier scene of festivity; and so enchanting was the effect of it, that for a long time Flora forgot to look round for Lady Augusta, so engrossing was her observation of other matters.

At last, however, Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie were conducted by a servant into one of the tents, where Mrs. Buchanan was seated to receive her visitors; and here, among a great many others, they recognised Lady Ruthven and her group of young people. One glance at the Lady Augusta convinced Flora that she was in no danger of being eclipsed, at least in the matter of dress. The little stranger wore the same sort of close-fitting jacket in which Flora had first seen her; and though, now that her bonnet was off, she could perceive that her hair was more beautiful than ever, still it was folded up quite simple and tight, and she did not wear a single ornament. She was seated, as usual, close to her mamma, and turned her large eyes about everywhere, as if she were much more occupied with the effect of other people's appearance, than of her own. Yet Flora remarked, that as soon as they entered, her colour came quite

brightly, and she returned their salutations with a wonderful appearance of good will and satisfaction; altogether, she looked so very unlike a disdainful rival, that Flora began to regain her good humour and confidence.

By and by, when a great many more young people had made their appearance, Mrs. Buchanan proposed that they should betake themselves to the dancing-room part of the lawn. Accordingly, there was very soon a quadrille formed, larger, I am sure, than any you ever saw, even at the dancing master's ball. Lady Augusta danced with Kenneth, and Flora with Algernon Ruthven, exactly opposite; and Flora was not too much occupied with her own steps, not to perceive that her little *vis-à-vis* danced with extreme grace and elegance. After the quadrille, the little people all waltzed and gallopaded round the great circle, looking just like a crowd of fairies with their gay dresses, and their light and frolicsome movements. When there was a pause for an instant, Flora found herself close beside the Lady Augusta, who took hold of her hand in the gayest mood possible, and asked, with all the cordiality in the world, if she "had ever seen so charming a party?" But Flo' was entirely occupied by the prospect of convincing her little friend, that, though not taught in Germany, her waltzing was in no way inferior

to her own; and she seized the opportunity, while the circle was much smaller, and the Lady Augusta looking on, to start off again with Kenneth, her giddy partner, to have another turn. She was perfectly successful, for several times, as she passed the different groups of papas and mammas, she heard them remark, what an elegant little girl, and what a pretty dancer Miss Flora Mackenzie was; and she remarked, that Lady Augusta's large eyes wandered round after her, with a grave expression, which Flora interpreted into a secret feeling of inferiority.

When the children had danced themselves quite into a fever, and were ready for anything in the shape of repose, there was a general move in the direction of the scarlet tent. Before the opening of this a large carpet had been spread quite smooth and tight, and the whole crowd of company ranged themselves on the edges of that carpet, without presuming to penetrate further, while every heart was beating, and every tongue uttering its laughing wonder, as to what the tent was to send forth for their amusement. They were not, however, kept long in suspense; for in a few minutes an Indian juggler, or conjuror, made his appearance, who, fastening up the front curtains of the tent, took his seat cross-legged in the midst of a great quantity of smooth white balls, rings, cups, plates, naked swords, cards, silk ropes, and a hun-

dred other strange things, which he had spread out upon the ground before him. He was very gaily dressed in loose satin trousers, and sharp-pointed embroidered shoes, and wore a white turban, with a crescent in front of it; altogether, his appearance made a great sensation. Little Evelyn, in particular, who had never heard of such people, except in the *Arabian Nights*, clapped her hands, and almost screamed with delight.

The proceedings of the juggler were watched for a while with breathless eagerness; and the tossing of the balls and rings in the air, six, nine, twelve, or fifteen of them at once, and the catching them again, as they descended in succession, met with clamours of approbation from every quarter.

By and by, however, he began some much more interesting tricks, in which the children were called upon to participate; and more than once, Kenneth, or Algernon, or Roderick, or some other of the little beaux who were present, entered the magic ring, to pronounce the words by which the conjuror made money dance in a plate, or even the plates themselves dance on a painted board. Among other things, he lifted the lid off one of the cups, and having placed a ball in it, and restored the lid, he bade the children declare which cup contained the ball, and as often as they pointed to one, however secure they might

feel of its being the right one, he invariably removed the lid, to demonstrate that it was empty.

Flora watched this trick with great interest. Two or three times she had felt so certain of having pointed out the right cup, that she could not believe her own eyes when the ball was not found in it; and by dint of carefully observing the proceedings, she thought she had at last discovered a clue to the mystery.

"Might I take off the lid myself, uncle? Do ask him whether I might not take off the lid myself!" cried she in an eager voice; and the juggler, who was there for the single purpose of amusing the children, complied with the utmost alacrity. Flora accordingly entered the circle. She was the first of the girls that had shown so much courage; and the conjuror having deposited the ball, and she having made herself quite sure which cup contained it, advanced, and lifting the lid, held up the ball amidst shouts of approbation from every one. It was very acute in Flora to make this discovery first among all the group; but it was, in itself, so simple, that any one of you, my dear children, would have been likely to do just the same thing. For all the mystery consisted in this—that the cup had two lids, one deep and the other shallow, or rather the under lid formed part of the cup itself, which the con-

juror removed along with the lid, without your being at all aware of it, unless you examined very close; and the ball was lying snugly meanwhile between the two lids, so that it was removed at the same time, and the cup, when opened up, always proved to be empty. Now, it was only a very sharp little pair of eyes which discovered all this, and no exercise at all of intellect or memory, or anything much worthy of praise; but every one praised Flora's acuteness and cleverness so much, that she was on the very highest pinnacle of exultation. Not, however, in the middle of her triumph did she forget to turn round and watch the effect of it upon Lady Augusta. To her great disappointment, the large eyes expressed their usual degree of indifference: they seemed scarcely to have observed the cleverness of Flora, and again a poisoned little tongue whispered to Flora that the young patrician envied her the triumph which she had just achieved.

Such vain and improper feelings as these were exactly such as were most likely to keep Flora aloof from her new acquaintance. The latter, indeed, was not one moment absent from her thoughts, though a common observer might have supposed her unconscious of the young Lady Augusta's presence; but she thought of her, only that she might seize opportunities of display-

ing an advantage over her. Accordingly, she talked and chattered with great vivacity and intelligence to every one; indeed, it seemed as if she had never been so much noticed—had never received so many gratifications to her vanity before; and when Lady Augusta, as she once or twice exerted herself to do, addressed a few words to her of good-humoured remark upon the happiness of the fête, Flora uniformly withdrew herself from anything like intimacy or sociality, that she might have the satisfaction of proving how much her society was desired in other quarters.

At last the conjuror had exhausted his magic, and the next point of attraction was the distant row of booths. When these came to be examined, all past excitement sank into nothing compared with the attraction which they presented. The booths were filled with elegant little trinkets, play-things, toys, little books and *bijouterie*—prettily arranged on stalls, at which some of Mrs. Buchanan's maids presided as shopwomen. All these fine things were numbered, and the children, before they entered the booths, were provided each with a purse containing a quantity of little tickets, also numbered, which were to serve them instead of money, and they were at liberty to buy whatever they chose, provided only that the

ticket they gave for each article should present a number as high as that borne by the toy which they desired to possess.

There never was such a scene of mirth and excitement as this little Fancy Fair. The hesitations of the children, and the various discussions before they could make up their minds to choose; the gallantry of the boys, who expended all their tickets in gifts to their respective partners; and the comparing of one another's possessions after they had once been decided upon, constituted a scene of gaiety surpassing all which the day had as yet presented.

Lady Augusta laid out her whole stock of tickets on a little glass globe, containing some beautiful gold fish; while Evelyn, after being sorely tempted by a dinner-service for her doll, ended with the purchase of a pretty China fountain for her dove to bathe in. Flora was still undecided. There was a little volume upon Ornamental Gardening, which greatly excited her longings; but she could not resist the temptation of showing the Lady Augusta that she had begun German, by selecting in its stead a beautiful little copy of UHLAND'S *Poems*. "There is a raffle, Miss Flora," said one of the maids at the stall; "perhaps you would like to put in your tickets and try for it: I will give you them all back again, if you should draw a blank."

The prize to be raffled for was a little musical box, in a beautiful enamelled case, and Flora instantly laid down both her books, and handed her tickets to the conductress of the raffle.

"Oh! I wish I had known," exclaimed Augusta, in a wistful tone, "I should so like to have had that box to surprise mamma with, by making it play in the night when she lay awake."

"Should you?" exclaimed Kenneth, whose store of tickets seemed quite inexhaustible, "then if there is any luck in good wishes, you shall have it;" and he immediately laid down the necessary contribution in the name of the Lady Augusta.

"It would be a sad disappointment, if you were not to have it after all, Lady Angusta," said Roderick, in that kind and gentle tone which was always in him a substitute for the gallantry of Kenneth; "suppose we make your chance a double one,"—and he also produced the requisite amount of tickets. One or two more little hands were extended to try their fortunes, and none waited the result with a more sparkling glow of excitement than the Lady Augusta.

"It is sure to be yours," said she, turning to Flora, "I am certain it will turn up for you; no one else has the smallest chance of succeeding, when you try."

"Why do you think so?" said Flora, with a glow

of gratified pride at this opinion of her universal success.

"Oh, because everything prospers with you—you are always fortunate in everything, and everybody admires you, and is fond of you; but I—I never succeeded in anything in my life, and nobody cares about me but my own mamma!" and the pale look of submission and regret which instantly saddened her features touched Flora's heart with sympathy and surprise.

"Number eighteen," exclaimed the girl at the stall—it was Augusta's number, and she advanced to put her hand into the wheel of fortune.

"A blank!—of course—did I not tell you it would be so?" she exclaimed, with a quick little laugh of vexation, and retiring immediately from the wheel.

"Nay, but you have another hope," said Kenneth, "Roderick's number is not drawn yet." The very next number was Roderick's; and it was proposed, as the girl said, that they should "change the luck," by allowing him to draw it himself. Flora's heart beat as he approached; she could not tell whether it was for hope or fear, and Roderick himself looked as if he would have given one of his fingers to succeed.

Again, however, a blank came up, and Lady Augusta showed extreme sweetness of temper by

the pains she took to comfort, instead of receiving comfort from, her two disappointed champions. A great many other tickets were drawn with no better success, before it came to Flora's turn; but as soon as number four was called, the interest of our group sparkled up as keen as ever.

Flora plunged her hand into the wheel with a flush of excitement on her cheek, and drew forth her number with a trembling hand. "The musical box!" It seemed as if Flora's guardian angel were determined that her head should be turned this day by all sorts of triumphs.

"I was sure you would win it!" exclaimed the Lady Augusta,—and there was a look of genuine good-nature and congratulation so unmixed with jealousy or discontent in her face as she spoke, that a sharp sting of self-reproach rose up in Flora's heart as she looked at her. She felt the strongest inclination to beg Lady Augusta's acceptance of the box as a keepsake from herself, and acknowledged that the pleasure of thus appropriating it would entirely outbalance any amount of gratification it could ever yield her. But then there was the triumph of proclaiming herself the favourite of fortune—the only successful applicant in the group. She could not resist the pleasure of exhibiting her prize, and of being once more the centre of observation to the party.

Besides, it would be time enough even then to make the present she desired; and again Flora's vanity whispered to her that there would be infinitely more *éclat* in presenting the box in this public way, than in simply transferring it on the impulse of the moment, that she might thus be the means of gratifying Augusta's affectionate desire to please her mother.

The next minute Flora found herself carried along by the little crowd, who were pushing forward to exhibit their various treasures to the papas and mammas in the blue tent; and her generous intentions were very soon forgotten in the enjoyment of the congratulations that showered upon her.

As soon as the Fancy Fair was over, the dinner-bell rang, and the sports of this delightful day were ended, by the whole party adjourning to the long tables which had been spread under the shade of an avenue of trees. It happened that at table Flora was placed as far off as possible from Lady Augusta, who was seated, as usual, beside her mamma, while Flora, at the other end of the table, had for a neighbour her kind old friend Mr. Drummond. Flora delighted in a merry gossip with good Mr. Drummond, and to-day he happened to be particularly pleasant and gay, and very much disposed to take notice of her; and so she laughed and chattered to him, and he bantered

her on her numerous triumphs, till her eyes sparkled, and her cheeks glowed with delight. Occasionally, however, as she looked up the table, and encountered the large grey eyes of the Lady Augusta fixed upon her with their keen and, as Flora now thought, melancholy expression, an obtrusive pang of regret and self-reproach would restrain her mirth for a moment while the reflection arose that she had certainly gratified her own pride at the expense of bitter feelings to another.

After dinner, or luncheon as it was called, the ladies followed Mrs. Buchanan into the house, to have coffee, and to resume their cloaks and shawls, in anticipation of their evening drive; and while they were all waiting for the carriages, the old lady turned to Augusta and Flora, and asked whether they were too tired to indulge her with a little music in the meanwhile. This was the signal for Flora's heart to begin its most anxious beating, and she remained in eager expectation of who should commence the exhibition of musical accomplishment.

"I have never played before company, you know, dear Mrs. Buchanan," said the Lady Augusta, in answer to a request addressed to herself, "and I would much rather play to you some morning when you are alone, if you please."

But the old lady continued to urge her request,

and, at her mamma's desire, the young lady advanced towards the harp;—for Mrs. Buchanan was so fond of music, that she had all sorts of musical instruments in her house;—and seated herself to play, with a deep blush, and a look of uneasiness, which proclaimed how little desirous she was of exhibiting. Her playing was not at all remarkable: she played one little air with great taste and simplicity, but without any attempt at brilliancy or execution; and then she rose and went over to Mrs. Buchanan, begging, in so modest and gentle a tone, to be excused from playing any more that night, that no one could mistake the motive which led her to it.

Flora felt perfectly contented. She knew that, despite the difference between harp and piano music, the Lady Augusta's playing was not to be put in comparison with her own; and, at Mrs. Buchanan's request, she seated herself at the piano, and played one or two of her own most difficult airs with an effect in perfect keeping with all the former successes of this day. She was praised and flattered to her heart's content; Lady Ruthven was most cordial and warm in the expression of her applause, and the young Lady Augusta herself wondered how Flora could have made such proficiency, without suffering like herself in point of health.

"I suppose," added she, in a playful tone, "you are too *fortunate* ever to be ill even."

These were the last words that passed between them, for, in the hurry of entering the carriages, they parted without saying good night; and Flora saw the young stranger, towards whom it might be expected that she should have made all the advances, depart after their second interview, without having received from her one word or act of the most common-place attention.

It was a beautiful moonlight evening, and Mr. Mackenzie and the boys expressed their desire to walk home by the side of the lake. Accordingly, Mrs. Mackenzie and the two little girls having thanked the old lady for their delightful day, got into the carriage together, and Evie, exhausted with fatigue and excitement, was soon fast asleep in one corner, while Flora sat silent and thoughtful in another.

The springs which set Flora's vanity in motion were by this time entirely relaxed, and her feelings, as she looked back upon the scenes that had been enacted, may be regarded as a fair specimen of those which all persons, similarly circumstanced, experience, no matter how wide may be the difference between their age or their position, and that of my little heroine. Flora had never been so praised—so noticed and flattered,

as on this eventful day; but she never had felt so unhappy as at the end of it. You may depend upon it, my dear children, that no human being ever pursues a gratification entirely selfish, never hesitating to sacrifice in the pursuit the nobler and better impulses of the heart, who does not find, after it is obtained, that instead of a gratification, the accomplishment of his purpose has proved only the source of unlimited regret and mortification even to himself.

Flora felt that she had altogether mistaken the character of the little stranger in whom she had been so determined to find only a rival, and a haughty superior. She acknowledged openly, that so far was the Lady Augusta from being influenced by any desire to outshine, that she had not only admitted her superiority in everything, but proved her own indifference to triumph, by disregarding every opportunity of securing it; and as she contrasted this retiring and unaffected deportment with her own restless thirst for applause, she could not help blushing for herself. She was conscious, too, that the young Lady Augusta would have loved her, and been intimate with her, if she had allowed it; and as she remembered the desponding words that were spoken in the booths, so unlike the language of the haughty, supercilious miss she had been determined to

discover, she felt how utterly deficient in kindness—in attention to the young stranger—in politeness—nay, in humanity and benevolence,—her whole deportment had been.

Let me assure you, my dear young readers, that the gratification of an inordinate vanity, however agreeable it may be at the moment, is as certain to lead to the same result in your cases, each and all of them, as we have already proved that it did in Flora's.

"I am very sorry you did not become more intimate with poor little Lady Augusta Ruthven, my dear Flora," said her aunt, after a long silence; "I am very sorry you found your prejudices too strong to be overcome."

"My prejudices, aunt!" repeated Flora.

"Yes, my dear—I presume you are convinced by this time, that it was only prejudice which led you to think her haughty and overbearing. I was very sorry to see they were strong enough to make you treat her with coolness and neglect. Her mother told me that she was anticipating your acquaintance with the utmost delight, and felt so chilled and disappointed by your proud manner towards her when she called, that Lady Ruthven did not know how to comfort her. I find that my first impression of her was the correct one—that she is the most warm-hearted and affectionate little

creature possible, but a prey to the shyness that is produced by ill health and unhappiness. Lady Ruthven tells me she has never quite recovered the shock of her father's death, and that all her affections turn towards Oakwood, the place in which she was born, and to which it is her constant aim to induce her mother to return. Poor Lady Ruthven was in hopes that she might have found an acquaintance in you, that would have interested her, and raised her spirits, and made Ardvaigh so agreeable, that her mother could have detained her at home for the future, with an easy mind—the little girl herself even looked forward to liking her Highland home, in the company of two little associates of her own age—but that hope is at an end now—she sees that my Flora has other objects, more important than that of showing kindness and attention to a sickly and sensitive little stranger."

The tears had been stealing silently down Flora's cheeks throughout the whole of her aunt's address, and, at its close, she exclaimed in an eager and distressed voice:

"But, aunt, I have felt most anxious for Lady Augusta's friendship all this time, and I only wished to excel before her, that she might see that mine was worth accepting."

"No, my Flora," answered her aunt, gently,

"that was not it; you wished first to prove to the little Lady Augusta that you excelled her in all things, and that she could possess no one accomplishment in which you did not surpass her, and so you preferred the gratification of your vanity by this process, to the natural and unaffected plan of entering upon your acquaintance, without any question of supremacy, or any idea of rivalship at all. Not considering, my Flora, that the very arrogance and pride, of which you were so forwar to suspect and to accuse her, were trebled in your own deportment."

Flora wept for a few moments without speaking, and then she said,

"Do you think, dear aunt, that I have not still time and opportunity to show her how much I should like to love and be kind to her?"

"No, my dear," answered her aunt, "her mother told me that she had, at last, made up her mind to take Lady Augusta to Oakwood during the remainder of the holidays. But I shall not regret even this painful disappointment to you, my Flora, if it impress upon your mind the useful lesson, that every success to which we can attain is worthless, if it become ours at the expense, or in disregard, of the feelings of others."

CHAPTER IV.

THE BOX OF GEMS.—A CHAPTER ON HISTORY, WHICH CONTAINS NOTHING DRY.

"PAPA," said Evelyn, one evening, when the holiday sports of the day had left the party in a somewhat reflective mood, and her mamma had placed her work-frame near the table, after tea, "there is the nicest—prettiest little mahogany box arrived for you from Mr. Drummond; I saw it on the parlour-table before dinner, and I am so curious to see what it contains—do you mean to open it to-night?"

"I shall be delighted to open it immediately," answered her father; "I dare say it will furnish excellent amusement for us throughout the whole of this evening—which of the boys shall we send to fetch it?"

In less than two minutes Evie and Hector had gone to the parlour for the box, and returned, carrying it between them with some difficulty, for it was rather heavy, and so smooth and polished, that it slipped through their fingers.

"Gently, gently—the contents are very precious to me, good people," said Mr. Mackenzie, as he assisted in raising and placing it on the

table; "but woe is me, Evie, how are we to get at them, since the box is locked, and the key, I dare say, safe in Mr. Drummond's pocket."

A look of blank dismay succeeded the sparkle of anticipation and excitement in Evelyn's face; but Hector changed the aspect of affairs again, by declaring that there was a letter lying on the parlour table, which he dared say contained the key, as it was addressed to his uncle, and did not look flat or well folded enough to be *only* a letter. Another journey to the parlour produced a letter from Mr. Drummond, and as the general attention and curiosity were now fairly excited in behalf of the mahogany box, it was a sensible relief to all parties, when the letter was found to contain the important key.

Every countenance was bent eagerly forward as Mr. Mackenzie lifted the lid, and various expressions of surprise and interest proclaimed the discovery of a great many rows of delicate little white stucco medals ranged with the utmost regularity on the red velvet lining. Mr. Mackenzie lifted out the uppermost tray or compartment of the box, and revealed another and another successively, till as many as half a-dozen trays were exhibited on the table, each filled with the same sort of beautiful casts—some larger, some smaller.

"Oh! uncle, I heard Mr. Drummond say that

he meant to send you a little collection of *gems*, which might be useful to the young people," said Flora; "pray are these they? why are they called gems?" And all eyes were earnestly bent downwards to examine the minute sculptures on each of the little medals.

"These cannot correctly be called gems," answered her uncle, "they are only copies or casts from gems, the designs of which are originally sculptured upon gold or silver, or some precious stone; the original sculptures are called gems."

"And how are they to be useful to the young people, papa?" exclaimed Evelyn; "That dear, good Mr. Drummond is always inventing some new enjoyment for us; and nothing could be more amusing than to look at these beautiful little gems—but how they are to be *useful* to us, I cannot think."

"I remember Mr. Drummond talking a great deal to you, papa, about the pleasure and advantage of studying *history* by means of medals," said Kenneth; "I dare say these gems are in some way connected with the study of history: for I can recognise a great many historical personages in the heads, and I see they are all dated; —for instance, here is Julius Cæsar, B.C. 36; and then on the other side is a beautiful little sculpture of his death by the hands of Brutus. Oh! how beautiful and interesting they are, papa."

"The study of history, uncle!" exclaimed Flora, in a tone of surprise, "how can one study history by means of medals; I wish I knew any way of studying it so amusing."

"Well, my Flora, you cannot do better than take advantage of that which Mr. Drummond, your good old friend, has provided for you," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "I assure you that nothing is more interesting."

"Did any one ever study history by means of medals, uncle?" asked Flora, still somewhat puzzled.

"To be sure they have, my dear; coins and medals are one valuable source from which the knowledge of historical facts has been derived," returned Mr. Mackenzie. "Do you not perceive that if one of these medals was coined in the year which is stamped upon it, and bore the head of a king, or an emperor, or a great warrior on one side, and the delineation, or type, or symbol of some remarkable event on the other; and if it made its appearance hundreds of years after the date of its coinage, it would convey a much more authentic affirmation of the fact which it is intended to commemorate than any tradition or account of the same fact merely handed down from one generation to another?"

"Oh! dear, yes, how pretty—how very inte-

resting," exclaimed Flora; "and the medals that are coined in our own days, uncle, will they some time—hundreds of years hence—be useful for the same purpose?"

"Possibly," returned her uncle; "but as we must suppose the art of printing lost, and all the records of modern history with which the world abounds swept away, before that can be at all necessary,—I suspect our coins are not destined to be so highly esteemed as those of our forefathers—and yet who can tell? If the world live as many ages to come as it has already numbered, there is nothing preposterous in such a supposition as that, some day or other, for instance, the date of the battle of Waterloo—nay, its very occurrence may be authenticated by the discovery of Allan's Waterloo medal dug up from what was one of the onion beds of our garden." Flora laughed at the idea of Allan's involuntary bequest to posterity, while the rest of the group were eagerly examining the little medals before them, without much regard to order or chronology.

"Come," said Mr. Mackenzie, when a consi-erable time had been expended on this irregular vey, "come, and let us see which of us can gle out the greatest number of acquaintances m among these heads. There, I have restored ys to their places except this upper one

of all; as it contains the people of oldest date, it is the most proper to begin with, and now let us set about it systematically."

The box was accordingly restored to its original regularity of arrangement, and the members of the little circle drew their chairs to the table, with looks of pleasure and anticipation.

"We have opened upon a row of most distinguished characters," said Mr. Mackenzie, as he glanced his eye over the medals that were uppermost; "and before we enter such illustrious society, I hope you will all make up your minds to pay a grave and respectful attention, while I endeavour to introduce you formally to their acquaintance."

Papa, and mamma, and each of the children lifted one of the gems, even to Hector and little Evie; and then they severally read aloud the name engraven upon them, while they were handed promiscuously about for inspection. The names were—

Pythagoras,
Socrates,
Plato,
Aristotle,
Epicurus,
Diogenes,
Zeno.

"Now, my dear children," said Mr. Mackenzie, "that list comprehends the most distinguished among the Greek philosophers; the people from whom all the instruction in morals and philosophy of which it could boast came to the world before the New Testament was written. Every one of them lived several hundred years before Christ was born; and so they could not of course know anything of the true religion which is revealed to us in our Bibles. But as they were all wise men, and possessed very great and enlightened minds, it will be extremely curious for us to trace the ideas of God and of religion, which they managed to strike out for themselves."

"But the Old Testament was written then, uncle," said Flora, in a tone of remonstrance, "and all about God's manner of governing the world in the old days of the Jews. Why could not these philosophers be contented with what it taught them, and wait patiently till our Lord Jesus Christ came to teach them all the rest?"

"Because, my dear Flora," returned her uncle, "though the Old Testament was in existence then, it was not to be found except among the Jewish people. And they, although they occupy so important a place in the history of the world, and though they were chosen by God to receive and preserve such truths as he chose at that early

period to reveal to mankind, were yet a very small community, inhabiting an inconsiderable portion of Asia, and very meanly accounted of by the heathen nations which surrounded them, and among whom the arts of civilisation, and the pursuits of science and of learning, had made much greater progress than among themselves. The great and wise men, whose heads are copied on the gems, would have been as little likely to seek for information of that kind among the Jewish Rabbis, as our own learned divines would be to seek for it among the Hindoos."

"But there was surely a religion peculiar to Greece, papa?—a religion observed by everybody,—practised by the common people, before these great philosophers rose up to enlighten them with their new doctrines?" said Kenneth.

"Yes, my boy, there was the popular mythology, of which you have read and heard so often," answered his father, "and in which were enumerated hundreds, or even thousands, of deities, to each of whom a distinct part was assigned in the general government of the universe. For instance, there was Minerva, the Goddess of Wisdom; Mars, the God of War; Venus, the Goddess of Beauty; Ceres and Pomona, of the Harvests; Apollo, the God of Music and Poetry;

and thousands of others, all particularised in the same way."

"Well, but, papa, these gods and goddesses were only for the sake of telling stories about," said little Evelyn; "people surely did not go to church for such gods as these, nor say their prayers to them, papa?"

"Yes, my Evie, people were quite foolish enough—even the wise and polished people of Greece—to worship these imaginary gods," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "and in those days, when the arts of sculpture and architecture were most highly and successfully cultivated, all the beautiful temples which were designed and ornamented by the Greeks, of the ruins of which you have often seen prints, were dedicated to the strange deities we are talking of. Don't you remember, when we were last at Mrs. Buchanan's, how much you admired the ruined temples in those views of Athens, that were lying on the drawing-room table?"

"And our philosophers were the first who ventured to disbelieve in the existence of this crowd of deities, papa?" said Kenneth. "I am wearying to hear what notions they were able to form on the subject, and how their views influenced the rest of the world. Socrates is mamma's head, papa. Suppose we begin with him: shall we?"

"Socrates is not the oldest of our philosophers," answered Mr. Mackenzie, "but in consideration of the extreme beauty and dignity of his character, as well as of the remarkable correctness of his views on the nature and attributes of the Deity, we cannot do better than award the preference to him. And now let us give all our attention to the history of this great person."

The children drew closer to the table with the looks and motions of little people, who are sure of being well entertained; and Mr. Mackenzie began his story.

"Socrates was born about four hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ, in a village of Athens, called Alopece. His father was a statuary, and Socrates, being educated to the same profession, produced several statues so beautiful, that they were admitted to ornament the Citadel of Athens. But his parents were extremely poor, and, at their death, Socrates was reduced to great pecuniary distress. He had already, however, made himself remarkable in the study of philosophy, and a rich Athenian, called Crito, offered him the post of tutor to his children. You may suppose how rapidly Socrates acquired distinction, when he was thus placed in a situation where he could obtain it; and it appears, that in all polite accomplishments he showed the same excellence as

in the pursuits of graver philosophy. In poetry and eloquence and music, his great talents were displayed at the same time that he was hearing all the sages of Athens propound their various doctrines, and forming his own conclusions and opinions on each.

At this time the war with Sparta broke out, in which every Athenian who was capable of carrying arms was required to take a part, and Socrates, in common with his companions, was obliged to leave the schools and join himself to the army. No change of situation, however, could materially affect the real character of Socrates. He was as brave and good a soldier, as he had been an industrious and successful student. His example, moreover, fired the Athenian youth with a contempt for danger, and for hardships; and, more than once, he proved the protector of his comrades in their hour of greatest need. Once, when Alcibiades, an illustrious fellow-soldier, was beaten down in the thickest of the battle, Socrates interposed between him and the enemy, and saved both him and his arms; yet, so great was his generosity, that when the prize of superior valour came to be awarded, he gave his vote in favour of the man whom his own heroism had saved. On another occasion, when Xenophon, a very young man, had fallen to the ground, covered

with wounds, he lifted him in his arms, protected him against the press, and bore him from the reach of further injury.

"His capability of enduring hardship, was not less conspicuous than his valour. He sustained unmoved the rigour of the Thracian winter; and when his companions in arms defended themselves against its violence with furs and luxurious clothing, he walked about the camp with naked feet, and head uncovered, to show how good a substitute, courage and resolution could prove for such indulgences. At the conclusion of the war Socrates returned to his philosophical pursuits; and we do not find him again taking any part in public life, till he had attained to the age of sixty years, when he was elected a member of the Council of Five Hundred."

"Oh, papa, please to explain to me what the Council of Five Hundred means," said Kenneth, interrupting his father in his description of Socrates. "I have so often heard of it, without being able to tell exactly what it meant."

"Well, my dear boy, it is very easily explained to you," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "the Council of Five Hundred was merely a senate, in which the laws of the Athenians were discussed and argued upon, previously to being brought before the populace to be approved and passed; for the the Government of Athens, as you know, was

what is called a democracy, in which the whole powers and privileges of the state were vested in the people themselves, and exercised by the voice of popular acclamation. When Socrates became a member of this body, his wisdom and firmness were constantly exercised to support the rights and liberties of his countrymen, and the cause of justice and integrity—so much so, that when the more corrupt or prejudiced among the Athenians found him perpetually oppose himself to their encroachments, he became gradually an object to them of envy and dislike. As, for instance, on one occasion, after a battle by sea, when a thunder storm prevented the Athenian generals from paying the funeral honours usually offered to the dead, and the populace demanded that they should be punished for the omission, Socrates stood out alone, and at the hazard of his life, resisted the outcry, declaring that no violence should induce him to give sentence contrary to law and justice.

"All this while, Socrates devoted himself to the counteraction, by his pure and wise instructions, of the evil imbibed by the youth of Athens from teachers of a different class; who, instead of instilling into the minds of their pupils pure moral principles and habits of self-control, only led them astray by foolish speculations on matters which are ot necessary to the improvement of mankind;

as, for instance, about the first origin of the universe and other things, which, of course you know, my dear children, could never be understood by a heathen people, who had no Bibles to inform them.

"Socrates used to say, 'Whatever is above us, does not concern us;' meaning, that what our minds are incapable of comprehending, was never intended to engross them. He accordingly endeavoured to teach his pupils—and he treated all Athens as members of his school,—that the true end of philosophy was to influence men's lives and actions, to free them from the dominion of evil habits, to inspire them with a love of virtue, and to show them that happiness was only to be attained by the path of wisdom.

"Cicero, a great Roman, who lived a long time afterwards, said, that 'Socrates was the first who called philosophy down from Heaven to Earth, and introduced her into the public walks and domestic retirement of men, that she might instruct them concerning life and manners.'

"Socrates refused all fees, such as were accepted by other philosophers from their pupils, and subsisted only upon the generosity of his friends, who sent him provisions as he required them, of which he always returned whatever portions might not be immediately needed; and when pressed by Alcibiades and others to accept of valuable gifts, he

resolutely declined them, though upbraided and reproached by his wife for doing so. Yet all the great men of Athens used to frequent his table, and he observed when he invited them, 'If they are wise men they will be contented with what I have to give them; if they are not, they are unworthy of notice.' Socrates, in short, seems to have received kindness, and respect, and deference from every one but his wife Xantippe, and she was a woman of a temper so violent and unreasonable, that, to this day, her name is used when we want to describe *a scold* of the most ungoverned kind. Yet even this annoyance he bore with his usual greatness and serenity, for when asked by Alcibiades how he could endure the disagreeableness of his home, he answered, that being accustomed to crosses there, he could the more easily sustain them when they met him abroad."

"Oh! dear uncle, what a fine character," exclaimed Flora, "I never heard of any one with such great virtues, and so devoid of faults. Socrates must have been quite perfect, for you have never so much as hinted at any evil propensity which he possessed."

"And yet, my dear Flora," answered her uncle, "Socrates was as prone to evil, as the very weakest and most erring amongst us. It has been said, indeed, that all his natural inclin-

ations leant to the side of error; for Zapyrus, a physiognomist, declared that all the lines of vice were in his face, and some of his pupils having turned Zapyrus into ridicule, for an opinion which they considered so erroneous, Socrates checked them by the assurance that it was true that all his desires were naturally evil, and that it was only by the rigid practice of his philosophy, which taught him to command and purify them, that they were overcome. One instance of the self-command of Socrates may be useful to some of us as an example;" and Mr. Mackenzie looked with a sly little smile towards Roderick and Kenneth. "He was greatly disliked, of course, by all those philosophers whose doctrines he contradicted, so much so, that they employed Aristophanes, one of their comic writers, to turn him into ridicule in a satirical drama, called the *Clouds*, which was represented in the theatre, and at which he was easily induced to be present; but his bearing was so good-humoured, and the ridicule pointed at him was received on his part with so much indifference, that it fell harmless to the ground, and soon ceased to excite the mirth even of the most illiterate of the people. Does not this teach a beautiful and useful lesson, my dear children? and is there not cause enough for Christians to blush, if they fail in attaining to the same noble

eminence of virtue, by which this great and good heathen was distinguished.

"At last the rancour of his enemies reached its height, and Socrates, as the reward of all his virtuous and exalted doctrines, was accused of the crime of atheism, or unbelief in the gods worshipped by his countrymen. Plato, his favourite pupil, endeavoured to defend him, but was immediately put to silence, and Socrates, in spite of a triumphant refutation of all the charges brought against him, was condemned to die by swallowing a decoction of hemlock.

"For thirty days before the execution of the sentence, Socrates remained in prison and in bonds, and during that time many of his friends, among whom were Plato, Crito, and Xenophon, urged him to make his escape; but he refused, because he would not oppose himself to the laws; adding to his refusal these remarkable words,—

"'Can you point out to me a place beyond Attica where death comes not?'"

"Oh! papa," exclaimed little Evie, who had been listening with breathless attention, "did this good Socrates know nothing about heaven? Had he not begun to guess that there was a happy place, where the foolish Gods of Athens were never heard of, where he might be good and happy for ever without any fear of these wicked Athenians?"

"I think we are at liberty to believe, that Socrates, though he was the only one among the Greek sages of whom we can say as much, had a very strong and distinct persuasion, that the soul did not die with the body, but passed immediately into a place of everlasting happiness," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "but then, you know, my Evie, this poor Socrates had no sweet secure faith in the promise of God to rest his hope on, as you and I have. His hopes sprang entirely from his own spontaneous belief, that there must be one great Supreme Ruler of all the universe, who watched over his creatures in life, and received them after death into his immediate presence.

"But you will hear by-and-by the grounds we have for believing, that Socrates died with this impression upon his mind.

"The day of his death his chains were taken off, and at his request Xantippe, who had come to visit him, was removed from his prison, that the violence of her grief might not interfere with the serenity of his last moments. It was then that those beautiful conversations occurred, which have been transmitted to us by Plato and Xenophon, and such of his friends as were present. He assured those around him that he was in expectation, though *not without misgivings*, of a happy existence after death. He believed that there was one Omni-

potent and Supreme God, entitled to the worship of all men, but that, intermediate between God and man, there was an infinite multitude of beings called demons, to whom God committed the fortunes of individuals and of nations, and one of whom he believed to be in constant communion with his own spirit. Some people, I know, consider that, in thus expressing himself, Socrates meant only to indicate his profound respect for reason, and to declare that he never acted except under its control; but *I*, for one, accept his language as indicating distinctly, a belief that some good and mysterious Being spoke constantly to his own heart, and whispered all those happy thoughts upon which he built his philosophy. With regard to our destiny after death, he believed that the spirits of the good went to heaven and lived happily for ever; but as he has never declared his opinion of the fate that was reserved for the wicked, it is probable, that he believed death to be to them the total end both of soul and body. All his views of religion were *practical*, or such as were likely to improve men's lives and manners, and not such as tended only to amuse their minds by idle speculations; and yet he is the only one of the sages of ancient Greece, of whom we can ay, that he entertained a firm, and settled, and ell-defined belief of a state of happiness beyond

the grave. One of his friends asked him some questions relative to his funeral, and he replied with a smile, 'As you please, only do not mourn over the lifeless body as though it were Socrates, —Socrates will have gone to be happy among the good.' Towards the evening he bathed, and afterwards took leave tenderly of his children and domestics, and gave them his last instructions; then he drank the hemlock, rebuking his friends who were present for their excessive grief, and walked up and down, waiting for the poison to take effect. He turned to Plato, and begged of him as his last request, that after his death he would offer up, in his name, a cock in sacrifice to Æsculapius the God of Physic; and when this final injunction was given, he lay down upon his bed, wrapped his cloak round him, and died. Cicero, one of his warmest admirers, used to declare that he never read the details of this scene without weeping."

The youthful group, who were Mr. Mackenzie's most attentive audience, seemed as if they could very easily follow the example of Cicero, so touched were they all by the dignity and sadness of the death of Socrates. At last, however, Roderick recovered his composure so far as to resume the conversation.

"I remember, uncle, to have heard some

people declare, that the circumstance of Socrates having ordered the sacrifice of the cock, was sufficient to disprove the general impression, that he rejected the Greek mythology,—I wonder what the reason could be for his having desired such a sacrifice?"

"I have often heard the same objection stated, my boy," answered his uncle; "to me I confess it never carried with it the smallest weight. It appears to be but an additional proof of the wisdom and the moderation of Socrates, and of the great difference there is between the position occupied by him, though the greatest of Heathen sages, and that filled by the humblest Christian of our own days. With *us* it is a duty, by every means and every example of our own, to endeavour to overturn the false notions of others upon the subject of religion, because we are now in possession of the truth. We have its evidences and its records to present in the Holy Scriptures, and the example of our Lord Jesus Christ by which to enforce its precepts. But Socrates had nothing to teach his countrymen except his own unsupported opinions, and he was aware that they could not be adopted by the populace in the place of an established national religion, because the ideas of a great philosopher are not fit to be received and followed out by the mass of the

common people; and so, to avoid the terrible confusion and wickedness which must always be the consequences of the *overturn* of an established religion, Socrates chose rather to encourage, by his example, the faith of the Athenians, though it was erroneous."

"How beautiful, uncle—how very grand and noble a character!" exclaimed Flora; "and how sad, that although he knew so little after all, and had so much Justice, Prudence, Fortitude, and Temperance in his religion; and though he had not half the confidence to sustain him that a Christian martyr has, yet that he should have died a true martyr at last: how sad, uncle, is it not?"

"No, my Flora," answered her uncle, "I cannot think so; it is rather, I think, a matter of rejoicing, when a great and good spirit like that of Socrates bursts away from the ignorance and superstition which obscured it here, and finds its way at last into the regions of truth and happiness in heaven."

It was a difficult matter to disengage the general attention from a subject so engrossing as the Death of Socrates, but at last the claims of other philosophers came to be admitted, and Roderick's gem, the head of Pythagoras, was brought under discussion.

"Pythagoras was born a great many years before Socrates," said Mr. Mackenzie, "as early as five hundred and seventy years before the coming of Christ, in Samos, one of the isles of Greece;—and his theory—the Transmigration of Souls—was one of the most *ingenious*, at least, that was ever taught among the ancients."

"Oh, but stop a moment, dear papa," interrupted Evelyn, who was the most attentive of listeners, "I must know what transmigration means; please—please explain to me what the transmigration of souls is—it sounds so very *hard*."

"I will tell you, dearest Evie," returned her papa, with a smile, "and I am delighted to see that you are determined to understand everything thoroughly. You will recollect, then, my Evelyn, that among all those Heathen sages, not one, as I told you before, had any distinct or settled notions of that immortality which our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to reveal to us. They did not know whether the soul died at the same time with the body, or whether it had a heaven or a hell to go to, or what became of it after death at all. Well, of course, a great many foolish things were suggested by these poor philosophers, who had no Bibles to teach them the truth, and nothing at all to help them to a knowledge of it, except

their own reason and ingenuity. The world was quite distracted in those days among a hundred different doctrines, each philosopher teaching his own, and having his own party of disciples to receive and adopt it. The doctrine that Pythagoras taught to his followers was this—that the soul of each man, instead of leaving his body at the moment of death, and ascending into heaven to the society of God and his angels, passed into some other body, and so went on and on, from one earthly tenement to another. If men had been good and wise in their former lives, their souls passed into the bodies of some nobler beings,—and, if they had been foolish or wicked, into the bodies of some meaner ones. For instance,—my Evelyn, before she was born into the world as a little girl, might, in the opinion of Pythagoras, have hopped about the world as a little bird—a wren or a titmouse—and because she was a very good and innocent little bird, she was promoted, at her death, to the body of a little girl; and then, again, if she continue a good and intelligent child, and grow up an estimable woman, it might happen that her soul should pass, at her death, into the body of a wise statesman, or general, or philosopher—whereas, if she were to turn out naughty, and indolent, and stupid, she would be turned back again, at her death, and

be made to enter the body of a frog or a lizard, or perhaps an earwig or a spider."

"How curious—how very singular a doctrine," exclaimed Flora, while Evie was laughing over her own transformations; "it was surely very *clever* to invent so strange a religion, uncle, and—do you think it, after all, quite impossible?"

"I most earnestly and humbly trust it to be impossible, my Flora," returned her uncle; "I think nothing could be more terrible than to exchange the sweet prospect of rest and safety and purity in heaven for this notion of perpetual trial —everlasting probation, in which your own efforts, and not the infinite mercy and goodness of God, were to secure your advancement."

"Everlasting, uncle! had they no idea of attaining heaven at last?" inquired Flora, with great eagerness.

"No, not what you and I delight ourselves in imagining heaven to be," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "they considered that when a man had attained the highest point of excellence belonging to his earthly nature, he rose to some unknown perfection in another planet, perhaps; but even when there, his shortcomings in the exalted state of being conferred upon him were quite enough to send him back again to be a worm or a caterpillar upon the earth.

"Oh dear! I should not like to have been a Pythagorean on those terms," said Flora, with a look of dismay; "what an existence of fear theirs must have been."

"Is it possible, uncle, that a creed so monstrous was ever believed or adopted to any extent?" inquired Roderick.

"Yes, my boy, I believe no doctrines were ever more in repute than those of Pythagoras," returned his uncle, "I think I can prove that fact to you by an argument which, I dare say, you never heard before. Pythagoras was, as you may have read, a great traveller, and is supposed to have been a contemporary of the Jewish prophet Ezekiel; and the two sages are said to have met and conversed, when the wanderings of the Greek philosopher carried him to Babylon, where the Hebrew prophet was in captivity. I do not say that Ezekiel could have really adopted the opinions of Pythagoras, but the best judges tell us that his prophecies contain forms of speech very similar to those made use of by the Greek. And this is our only mode of accounting for the extreme prevalence of the tenets of Pythagoras among the Jews subsequently to the period of the Babylonish captivity; for that they did prevail to a great extent, I think every careful and reflecting student of the New Testament will allow."

"How papa? I wish you would point out the traces of Pythagorean persuasion to me in the New Testament," said Kenneth.

"There are many," returned his father; "but two of the most familiar will answer my purpose. Do you remember when our Lord asked his disciples, 'Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?' and they replied, 'Some say Moses, and some Elias, and some say that one of the old prophets hath risen from the dead.' Now, of course, if some declared their belief that our Lord and Elias were one and the same, they must have concluded that the soul of Elias or Elijah, after so many ages' disappearance, had entered into the body of him from whom they listened to the words of eternal life. And in the same spirit the question was answered by the declaration, that 'Some said John the Baptist,' though nobody could be ignorant that John, who had lately been beheaded, was, in respect both of his age and ministry, our Lord's contemporary.

"Our Lord was not at all angry with the Jews for entertaining this idea, uncle. I do not think he ever even contradicted it," said Flora, in a thoughtful tone.

"Yes, my Flora," answered her uncle; "though not quite directly, perhaps, he contradicted it in the most convincing and unanswerable manner.

Do you remember, at the time of our Lord's Transfiguration, when Moses and Elias appeared in shining garments to the eyes of the disciples? Though other lessons may be derived from the selection of these two saints by our Lord, for the purpose of presenting themselves on the Mount at so important a moment,—we are quite at liberty to draw from it this conclusion also, that our Lord Jesus desired to convince his disciples, that his Being was perfectly distinct from that either of Moses or of Elias."

"Oh, yes! how beautiful! how wise!" exclaimed Flora, in a tone of solemn enthusiasm; "what a wise and great motive our Lord had in all his acts and deeds towards men!"

"Yes, dear Flora; and this very act of proving a truth, where a mere assertion would have sufficed, conveys to us and to all a good lesson; it teaches us that we ought never to be too proud to add *proofs* to the assurances we bestow on others."

"Was this the whole system of Pythagoras, uncle?" asked Roderick, "this about the transmigration? Had he no clearer or more extensive notions concerning the future than of this never-ending, ever-varying life of trial?"

"He entertained deeper views than I have explained to Evie upon the nature of the soul," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "as, for instance,

this: he believed the soul to consist of two parts,—one, the rational, seated in the brain—the other, the sensitive, stationed in the heart. The sensitive part, he considered as belonging to the body, and so perishing with it,—the rational, he believed at death passed off in some ethereal vehicle or covering to the invisible world, where it remained till it was sent down again to occupy another body, and join itself to another sensitive nature on earth. The doctrines of Pythagoras, however," added Mr. Mackenzie, "are so enveloped in mystery, that most of you are as yet too young to understand them."

"Is there no story to be told about Pythagoras, uncle?" asked Flora; "nothing about his manner of living or of dying?"

"Not much," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "he lived so very long ago that but little has descended to us. He was persecuted by the republic, which usually tired first of its greatest favourites; and when he would have found shelter among another people, called the Locrians, they refused to afford it. He fled at last to Metapontum, and took refuge in a temple dedicated to the muses, perhaps expecting their interposition in his behalf; but no Divine assistance was extended to him, and he died in the temple, of starvation."

"Poor Pythagoras! Is that all, papa?" asked Evie; "but his death does not make me half so sad as that of Socrates."

"These are all the details I can give you of his fate," answered her father; "but he has left many curious maxims behind him which may, perhaps, amuse you, for they prove that he and his disciples were the slaves of some very odd superstitions. Some of them are exceedingly poetical, others merely good allegorical proverbs; while some relate to ancient customs and usages with which you are not yet acquainted. These, for instance, are a specimen:—

Adore the sound of the whispering wind.

"That is very sweet, and seems to imply a sort of poetical and superstitious worship of nature.

Stir not the fire with a sword;

which means, apparently, 'Use no violent or warlike means to bring about a happy or a simple result.'

Setting out on a journey turn not, for the furies will turn with thee.

"This is something like Margery's whim, when she calls it ill luck to turn back. She does not know what dignified authority she has for it.

Turn not aside from an edge tool.

Pass not over a balance.

Look not in a mirror by the light of a candle.
At a sacrifice pare not your nails.

"Oh, papa, old Nannie says if I pare my nails on a Sunday, some evil will happen before they grow again," said Evie, "and I am sure *she* never heard of Pythagoras."

"And yet, I dare say it is his maxim that has travelled down in two thousand years from Athens to Glenlee," answered her papa, smiling; "but I have not finished yet."

Taste not that which hath fallen from the table.
Break not bread.
Roast not that which hath been boiled.
Sleep not at noon.
When it thunders touch the earth.
Sail not on the ground.
Receive not a swallow into your house.
Breed a cock, but do not sacrifice it, for it is sacred to the sun and moon.
Plant not a palm.
Plant mallows in thy garden but do not eat of them.
Abstain from beans.

The younger among the little folks laughed heartily over these maxims, while the elder ones, with papa's help, amused themselves with puzzling out some meaning to attach to them, or some similarity between them and the common superstitions which prevail among uneducated people in our own age and country; and you would be quite surprised, if you were to follow

their example, to perceive how very great a resemblance exists between the maxims of the greatest philosophers of old, and the common superstitions of the vulgar in modern times.

By-and-by the party returned to the consideration of the gems, and as it had come to papa's own turn to exhibit his, he began to sketch out to them the history of Plato.

"Plato is a name which the youngest among you must already have heard and read about," said Mr. Mackenzie; "for we are more familiar with him than with many of his contemporaries, on account of the numerous writings of his that have been preserved and transmitted to us. He was a favourite disciple of Socrates, and it is in a work of his, as well as in one by Xenophon, that our interesting account of Socrates' death is to be found. He was born four hundred and thirty years before Christ, in the isle of Egina. In his youth, he seems to have devoted himself to the study of poetry; he wrote an epic poem before he was twenty, but he considered it so inferior to that of Homer, a great Greek poet, with whom you young ladies have still to make acquaintance, that he burnt it in disgust. At the age of twenty he became a disciple of Socrates, and philosophy was ever afterwards his most engrossing pursuit. Like most of the sages, he

travelled for many years before he began to teach his own doctrines: at last, however, he opened his school on a spot of ground which had been left to the youth of Athens, by an Athenian called Hecademus, that they might pursue their exercises upon it. It was called the Academy, in compliment to the giver, and from that time all places devoted to public instruction have been called *Academies*. Plato's moral doctrines were exceedingly pure and elevated, indeed he was the most intellectual and reflective of all the sages, but his notions of the Supreme Being were strangely compounded of truth and falsehood. He believed, for instance, that there were three persons in the Godhead, just as we do; but then his three persons were quite different from ours, as you may suppose, for he had nothing but his own ingenuity and reflection to teach him; and the ideas which he formed of the three persons are much too vague and mystical for me to explain exactly to you. The first of them, however, he looked upon as the Supreme and Eternal God, from whom the second and third emanated or proceeded. Of the second he gives us no particular details, but the third he calls the '*Soul of the Universe*,' and considers that the visible world was created by him; he believed that the materials of the world were immortal,

undying, everlasting, that they never had a beginning and never will have an end, just as we believe the nature of Almighty God to be; and that the third person of the Godhead, the '*Soul of the Universe*,' merely modelled and shaped those materials, and reduced them to the order, and regularity, and beauty, which we can now trace in all around us; he believed the souls of men to be emanations from the Soul of the Universe,—*portions* of the great Eternal Soul, which were sent forth to perform their pilgrimage on earth, and then were imbibed or absorbed again by their divine original."

"I have often heard of that doctrine of Plato, uncle," said Roderick; "surely it is not a happy, nor even, I think, a very wise one;—because if we were only little portions of the Deity, there would be no need for us to make any efforts to be good during our state of trial, since we should be quite certain to be absorbed at last, inasmuch as every part of God must be *Eternal*, and of course we cannot believe, that what had once been a part of God's own being, could ever be either destroyed or condemned to everlasting punishment. I think a belief in Plato's theory must have reduced men to the condition of mere machines who did not belong to themselves at all."

"I agree with you entirely, my boy," answered

his uncle, "and besides the objections you have started, there is another, which I consider of equal weight, namely, that one cannot, without a sense of profaneness, imagine that which is in reality a portion of the divine essence to be subject to the errors, and frailties, and imperfections, which are inseparable from the souls of men."

"I think there is something very beautiful and poetical in the 'Soul of the Universe,'" said Flora, with a glow of enthusiasm in her dark eyes; "what an immense and magnificent *soul* it must be which would animate the whole universe; I like Plato's philosophy, uncle, though it is not correct."

"We are quite at liberty to admire the poetry of it, at least, Flo'," answered her uncle, "and indeed there is much more in it than that to be admired; for it was at least very striking and wonderful, that a Heathen philosopher should fix upon the doctrine of a Trinity at all,—it showed, at least, a prodigious power of reflection."

"Is this all about Plato, papa? are there no stories?" asked Evie.

"Oh, yes, my Evie, I am not going to forget them," answered her papa, laughing; "but the grave part first, you know. Plato was a great mathematician, which I hope will not deprive

him of Flo's approbation; he was so extremely fond of the study, indeed, that he wrote above his door, 'Let no one unacquainted with geometry enter here.' One day Diogenes dined with him. Diogenes was one of a set of very unamiable philosophers who made all wisdom to consist in despising everything, in holding in contempt not only the enjoyments and indulgences of life, but even the feelings of those with whom they associated. When he dined with Plato, he trampled upon the tapestry of the room with dirty shoes, and left it soiled by the stains of his footsteps, at the same time turning to his host, as if to give its proper meaning to the deed, he said, 'I trample on the pride of Plato.' With the calm and dignified rebuke of a true philosopher, Plato replied, 'with greater pride.' Plato in his life was like all his contemporaries,—equally admired, courted, envied, and hated; but, unlike most of them, his death was peaceful and easy: he died of old age, at the age of eighty-one, or as some have alleged, as early as seventy-one."

Various reflections and opinions were expressed on the life of Plato, such as, I dare say, may follow the reading of this little sketch of him among yourselves, my dear children.

Then Kenneth produced his gem, and announcing it to bear the head of Aristotle as its

device, he handed it round for examination, while many eager inquiries were turned upon Mr. Mackenzie for the history of the life and doctrines of that great philosopher.

"Aristotle comes very opportunely after Plato," said Mr. Mackenzie, "being one of the most distinguished of his pupils. He was born at Stagyra, three hundred and eighty-four years before Christ; hence, you will often hear him called 'The Stagyrite,' as if to distinguish him as the greatest or most remarkable person whom the island had ever produced. His father was physician to Amyntas, the grandfather of Alexander the Great, under whose protection it was that Aristotle flourished. He was very young when the death of both his parents left him an orphan to the care of Proxones, his guardian, who neglected him so much that the young Aristotle grew up in the practice of all the follies natural to an undisciplined youth. He was a soldier; but the slender distinction he acquired in arms did not satisfy him, and so he consulted the Oracle at Delphos, as to what walk of life he should pursue with the greatest success for the future."

"If you please, dear uncle, what was the Oracle at Delphos?" asked Flora, interrupting her uncle very earnestly; "I have often both heard and read allusions to it. What does it mean? was it a

very wise person, such as we call an 'Oracle of Wisdom?'"

"Why it will be a long story to tell, my dear Flo'," answered her uncle, "but I am so glad to see that you are resolved to understand everything that I will tell it you with great pleasure. Well then, you must know, that in Delphos, one of the isles of Greece, there was a little cave, out of which a peculiar kind of gas or vapour was found to exhale, of which the nature was, that every one who approached the cave near enough to be affected by it, became violently excited and disordered, as if he had drunk some noxious or poisonous draught.

"In our day you know, my Flora, such a phenomenon as this would be investigated and examined till it was proved to be something quite natural and easy to be understood; as the very same sort of gas and its effects have long become known to our chemists and other scientific people. But in those days, before science had made the advances which she has since done, every strange thing that happened was set down to some supernatural cause. Accordingly this singular gas was supposed to be the spirit of the Deity, who chose to commune with men from the mouth of this cave; and so the Greeks of course very soon began to treat the cave with great deference and respect. They built a temple over it,

and in this temple a priestess was accustomed to reside, for the purpose of receiving the divine inspiration of the Deity from the cave. She was called a Pythoness; and when any difficulty or emergency arose she placed herself on a sort of seat, called a tripod, just over the orifice from whence the gas issued. Questions were addressed to her from persons stationed without; and after the gas began to take effect upon her she made her replies; all that she uttered, when under its influence, being considered as the inspiration of the Deity. By-and-by, however, when the priests perceived the great respect and reverence in which the words of the Pythoness or Oracle were held, and the extensive influence which they exercised over the most important affairs of all the surrounding nations, (for from every region of the civilized world people came to consult the Oracle of Delphos,) they began gradually to bend the Oracle to their own purposes. For example, they themselves addressed the questions to the Pythoness, and transmitted her replies back to the people who inquired. By this means they could shape the Oracles into whatever form they chose, and generally managed to render them so ambiguous that whatever might be the issue of the events which they foretold, the credit of their inspiration was saved."

"But how could that possibly be done, uncle?"

asked Flora. "I cannot imagine how they could be clever enough to manage that."

"Very easily indeed, my dear Flo'," replied her uncle; "I will show you by an example:—A king of Lydia, called Crœsus, came and put this question to the Oracle,—'If I make war upon the Medes, shall I be successful, or the reverse?' to which the Oracle answered,—'If you go to war with the Medes a great kingdom will be overthrown.' And Crœsus, taking this as an indisputable assurance of victory to himself, made an attack upon Media, was defeated, and lost his crown. Whereupon he returned to Delphos to reproach the Oracle for its false prediction, but received for answer, that the Oracle had not deceived him, seeing that a great kingdom *had* certainly been overthrown in his own dominion of Lydia?"

"Oh! how clever!" said all the children in a breath; "what cunning priests they must have been."

"What reply did the Oracle return to Aristotle, uncle?" asked Roderick.

"That all his future successes should be in the paths of philosophy," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "and the result proved that, if not divinely inspired, the Delphic Oracle was at least capable of bestowing very useful advice.

"Aristotle placed himself under the teaching of Plato at the age of eighteen, and studied fifteen years before he became a teacher himself. His system, however, did not contain any peculiarity of religious doctrine. He rather inculcated ethics or morals, a noble treatise on which has descended to us among his writings. He was the person, moreover, who brought *logic* (which is only the *science of argument*) to perfection; and his pupils were all famed for their skill as *dialecticians*, which name is still given to all who excel in the art of logic. His pupils were called Peripatetics, and his academy the Peripatetic School, from the circumstance of their continually walking backwards and forwards during the time in which they studied or disputed.

"When he was thirty-two years of age, he received a letter from Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great, and the son of that Amyntas to whom his own father had acted as physician. Its contents afford the best proof of the eminence to which Aristotle had already attained. Let us try whether I can recollect them *verbatim*."

Philip, king of Macedon, to Aristotle. Health.

Know that I have a son. I thank the gods, not so much that they have given him, as that they gave him in the time of Aristotle. I trust that you will make him a king worthy to succeed me, and to govern the brave Macedonians.

"After this, Aristotle became the tutor of Alexander; and if his precepts can be looked upon as forming the character of his pupil, their value is sufficiently proved. He married Pythias, sister of the king of Mysia; and here, at least, his fate is in direct opposition to that of Socrates; since his wife was in herself so good and gentle, and so devotedly beloved by him, that he used to offer sacrifices to her, as though she had been to him a goddess, or guardian spirit."

"Oh! how sweet! how pretty! Charming Pythias!" exclaimed Flora; "how glad I am that some of these poor philosophers at least were happy. I hope Aristotle was not persecuted for being good and wise, uncle. I hope this good Pythias had not the pain of being dragged away from her husband's prison that he might swallow poison."

"As long as Alexander, his illustrious pupil, lived, Aristotle was treated with unvarying respect and deference," said Mr. Mackenzie; "but when death deprived him of this powerful protector, the rancour and envy of the Athenians, who seem always to have stored up their enmity to bestow it on the good, assailed Aristotle; and to escape the persecution that threatened him he fled to Chalcis, a town in Libya.

"It is said that he was accused of cowardice in flying before his enemies, instead of waiting to brave his fate, as his predecessor Socrates had done; and that he replied to the accusation by declaring, that his only reason for flight was 'that the Athenians might not again sin against philosophy.' His seclusion did not long shelter him, however, for he died in a month after he had reached it."

"But Aristotle left no new doctrines behind him, uncle," said Flora; "you have not told us of anything which he tanght his Peripatetics, except logic and ethics—are they all that he has ever written about?"

"No, my Flora, Aristotle has written a great deal besides that," answered Mr. Mackenzie. "There are four great treatises of his in our possession: one upon 'Ethics,' or morals—one upon 'Dialectics,' or the science of argument, as I told you—one upon 'Poetics,' or the art of poetry—and last, not least, one, the greatest of all, upon 'Politics,' which contains a remarkable compliment to the Constitution of England."

"Of England? uncle!" repeated Roderick, in a tone of surprise, "Aristotle compliment the Constitution of England! Do tell me what you mean.'

"Why,' returned Mr. Mackenzie, "he gave

it as his opinion, that every form of government which, up to that period, had ever been made use of in the world, was objectionable. There were then only three different systems in existence, as you know."

"Please tell me what they were, uncle," said Flora, "for I do not at all understand them."

"Well, dear Flo,'" said her uncle, "there were in those days only three orders or systems of government, as I told you, in the world, and under one or other of these every civilized nation was placed. There was—First, a pure monarchy, where the king's authority was absolute or despotic, like that of the Sultan of Persia, or the Grand Signior of Constantinople—Secondly, a pure oligarchy, where the administration of the government rests entirely with the nobles, without any control from a sovereign, or any intervention of the people—And thirdly, a pure democracy, like that of Athens, where all ranks and conditions of men have an equal share of influence in the State, and where all public measures are decided upon according to the suffrages of the populace.

"Well, uncle, I understand that," said Flora; "and Aristotle disapproved of all those——"

"He gave it as his opinion," replied Mr. Mackenzie, "that each of these systems was in itself faulty; but declared, that if it were possible to

combine them—to form a system in which all three might be *united*—the result would be the most perfect form of government which the world ever produced; adding, however, that he believed no human wisdom could ever succeed in effecting such a combination. And now I am coming to the compliment which he may be said to have offered to Britain; for that which he believed to be impossible has been fulfilled in the British Constitution—that Constitution under which we live, and which consists exactly of the combination of the three systems of Aristotle; and the result bears testimony to his wisdom and judgment, being by far the most perfect system of government in existence."

"But I want to know *how* the British Constitution combines these three," said Flora, who was rapidly acquiring the excellent habit of at least *trying* to solve all difficulties, "What does the British form of Government consist of?"

"It consists of king, lords, and commons, my Flora," answered her uncle, "which severally answer, in effect, to the monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy of Aristotle; but as I consider you too young still to understand anything so abstruse as the political economy of England, we are not going to interrupt our acquaintance with the Greek philosophers, for the purpose of lecturing

on the British Constitution; so, if you please, produce your own gem."

"It is the head of Epicurus which is to be found on mine, uncle," said Flora, "and as I never heard of him before, I am afraid there is not anything very remarkable about him."

"Why, your list of acquaintances is not very extensive as yet, my Flora," returned her uncle, with a smile, "and I assure you Epicurus is perfectly deserving of a place in it. He was the founder of one of three great schools of philosophy in Greece, called respectively the Epicurean, the Stoic, and the Cynic. It will be very amusing to compare the doctrines of all these with each other, and if, as I have some little idea is the case, Hector and Evie can furnish us with the founders of the other two, our circle will be complete."

"Zeno" and "Diogenes" were severally read aloud from the medals of the little ones, and then Mr. Mackenzie took up his story.

"Epicurus, the founder of the Epicureans, was born at Gergettium, a village of Attica, three hundred and forty years before Christ, so that he was the immediate successor of Plato and Aristotle. He had no ideas of immortality, and therefore his doctrines all tended to the improvement of men in the present life. He taught his followers, that the

greatest of all goods was Pleasure, and, therefore, the object most eagerly to be sought for—the greatest of all evils Pain, and so, that which was most anxiously to be avoided."

"Oh! uncle, what a very degrading doctrine," exclaimed Roderick; "what a very contemptible notion to dignify with the name of Philosophy."

And the young ones laughed heartily at the very comfortable and agreeable notions of Epicurus.

"Softly, softly, if you please, my good friends," said papa, with a smile, "I dare say we shall find, by-and-by, that the notions entertained by Epicurus of what constituted pleasure and pain, are rather more elevated than any which you can boast of at this moment. He contended that nothing was capable of yielding pleasure, except virtue; and nothing could entail pain, but the commission of vice: so that, you see, in reality, the Epicureans held a very high place in the scale of moralists, so long as their doctrines retained their purity. I am sorry to say, however, that, like yourselves, many of those who professed to be Epicureans, very soon began to entertain mean and incorrect views of the happiness to be pursued, and to confound it with that blind gratification of their own will, which it

accorded so well with *their* philosophy to secure. Accordingly, there very soon came to be two kinds of Epicureans: those who followed their teacher implicitly,—who were sober, temperate, mild and studious, and who declared their belief, that the only happiness—the only tranquillity of mind, which was worthy their pursuit, was that which is derived from self-control, and the entire command of our propensities. And, on the other hand, those, who, under the name of Epicureans, used their pretended philosophy as an excuse for indulging in all manner of wicked and foolish excesses;—whose ideas of pleasure extended no farther than the gratification of the moment, at whatever expense of principle or propriety.

"In opposition to these, and as if to afford a contrast to their intemperate self-indulgence, a sect of philosophers sprang up, called the Cynic School, of which Diogenes, though not the founder, was one of the most zealous and distinguished professors."

"Diogenes! papa," exclaimed Evie, "is not that the name of the ill-natured person, who soiled poor Plato's tapestry with his dirty shoes?"

"Exactly, my Evie," answered her father, "I am glad to see that you do not forget your introduction to the philosophers, though some of them

are certainly more worthy of your acquaintance than Diogenes. He was distinguished for the extreme pride and haughtiness with which he maintained his own doctrines, and held those of others in disdain. And yet his origin certainly affords no ground for pride, since the first thing recorded of him is, that he was banished from Sinope, with his father, a banker, for having coined false money. He retired to Athens, and joined himself to the Cynic School of Philosophy, all the disciples of which, however, he very soon outdid in austerity and moroseness. He professed to hold the comforts, and even the necessaries of life, in contempt, and all mankind in scorn and derision. He used to live in a tub, which he carried with him from place to place, and disdained to accept of any other lodging."

"A tub! uncle—what do you mean?" asked Flora, in amazement, while Evelyn laughed heartily; "you do not mean that he sat, slept, ate, and drank, in a tub, such as we know about?"

"Indeed I do, my dear Flo'," returned her uncle, laughing. "I do not know whether there was anything peculiar about the Greek tubs, but, without doubt, one of them formed all the lodging ever made use of by Diogenes. Moreover, he lived by *begging*, and liked nothing better than to

call himself a vagabond, without house or home. His whole possessions consisted in a staff, a wallet, and a wooden bowl; and one day seeing a boy drink out of the palm of his hand, he threw his bowl into the river, and thanked the boy for having taught him to look upon it as an unnecessary luxury.

"One day, Alexander the Great, issuing from the gates of Athens, at the head of his troops, encountered Diogenes in his tub, who had planted himself directly in the path of the conqueror. Alexander was struck with the singularity of the philosopher's appearance, and interrupted his march, to satisfy his curiosity by conversing with him.

"After some time passed in listening to the arrogant absurdities of the philosopher, Alexander asked whether there was anything which he could do for him.

"'Yes,' was the reply, 'you can stand out from between me and the rays of the sun.'"

"Oh! papa," "Oh! uncle," exclaimed the children, in tones of laughing incredulity, "what did he mean?"

"Simply to show the conqueror of the world that what gave *him* pleasure, was beyond the power of Alexander either to give or to take away," answered Mr. Mackenzie.

"And what did Alexander think of him?" asked Kenneth, "are we informed by history of that?"

"Oh, yes," answered his father, "it is said that Alexander, whether in admiration of the independence, or by way of turning into ridicule the unmeaning pride of the man, looked him in the face, and exclaimed, 'If I had not been Alexander, I should have certainly become a Diogenes.'"

"Is it possible, papa, that Alexander could mean what he said?"

"Without doubt, my boy, for Alexander was a man of too much sense ever to speak without meaning something; but what that meaning was, in the present case, I cannot undertake to decide. I think it probable, however, that he heartily despised a man, who could affect to prefer rudeness to good-breeding, and voluntary filth to decent cleanliness."

"There is no end to the stories about Diogenes' ill-humour or cynicism. Once, at the Olympic Games, a celebrated scene of public amusement in Greece, he passed some young men from Rhodes, distinguished by the extreme richness of their dress, and exclaimed, 'That is pride!' Then turning to a group of Lacedæmonians, who were distinguished for the extreme simplicity of their attire, he pointed to them, and said, 'And that

also is pride!' At last, as he was sailing over to Ægina, he was taken by pirates, who carried him to Corinth, for the purpose of selling him as a slave. Before determining what his price should be, they asked him what he could do? He replied, 'I can command men;' and, observing a Corinthian gentleman pass by, he added, 'Sell me to that man, for he wants a master.' Accordingly the gentleman bought him, and made him tutor to his sons. The friends of Diogenes, after this, wanted to redeem him, but he said to them, 'You are fools: the lions are not the slaves of their feeders—the feeders are the servants to the lions;' meaning that those with whom he lived, and who maintained him, were more his slaves than he was theirs.

"In spite of the hardships to which he subjected himself, Diogenes attained to a very great age. He was upwards of ninety, when, travelling on foot to attend the Olympian Games, he was seized with a fever, and lay down under a spreading tree, which screened him from the violence of the sun. Many of those who passed by in carriages and on horseback offered to convey him to a place where he might be attended to, but he rejected their kindness with scorn. 'Go you to the games,' said he, 'and leave me to struggle with the disease: if I master it, I will follow you—if

it masters me, I shall go to the shades below.' The fever, however, continuing, Diogenes grew impatient, and the same night destroyed himself, —thus dying, as he had lived, an impostor, and uttering a falsehood with his parting breath. He had not the manliness to acknowledge that life had become a burden to him, but said, 'This is not to die—this is to get rid of my fever.'"

"Oh! uncle, what a disagreeable, horrid old man," said Flora, with a look of great disgust, "he is not worthy of a place among our philosophers at all."

"And yet Plato used to say of him, that he was a Socrates gone mad," answered her uncle, with a smile.

"Oh, foolish Plato, exclaimed little Evie; "if I had been he, I should have been very sorry to compare the good Socrates to so ill-natured and foolish a person."

"He who first showed resolution enough to cast aside the errors of both these doctrines," resumed Mr. Mackenzie, "and to erect one for himself which should preserve a medium between them, was Zeno, the last of our philosophers, and one whose admirable life will form a good conclusion to our long lecture. He was born at Citium, in the Isle of Cyprus, three hundred years before Christ. While he was still a youth, his

father, a rich merchant of Cyprus, brought him from Athens several of the writings of the great philosophers, which he studied eagerly till he had reached the age of thirty years, and then he went to Athens that he might become more intimate with the schools. His father gave him, at his departure, a valuable cargo of purples, which was lost at sea, and it is said that, from the time of this heavy loss, he began to cherish his contempt for riches. It is very unlikely, however, that rich merchandise should have ever greatly engaged the attention of one who was entering the world in pursuit of wisdom.

"The first place into which he entered, after his arrival in Athens, was a bookseller's shop, where he lifted a volume of XENOPHON'S *Commentaries*, and read it for some time with such delight, that he turned eagerly to the bookseller, and inquired of him where he could find such men; whereupon the bookseller pointed out one of the Cynics called Crites, who was passing by at the time, and bade Zeno follow him, which he did, and shortly afterwards became his disciple. But the rudeness of manners, the squalid apparel, and the moroseness of the Cynics, disgusted him, and he went from school to school that he might judge the doctrines of each. At last one of the teachers said to him, 'I am no stranger, Zeno, to

your Phœnician arts—you enter into my garden to steal away my fruit;' meaning, that he saw very well that Zeno would one day found a school of his own which would eclipse the others,—the truth of which Zeno very soon proved. He taught in a portico adorned with pictures, and called the Porch, or *Stoa*, from which his school of philosophy very soon took its name of the *Stoic*. His doctrine was, that there is no such sensations as those of pleasure and pain, except as people make them for themselves. That bodily suffering, for instance, may be entirely neutralized by the exercise of self-control, and that it is unworthy the dignity of human nature to be affected by anything."

"Oh, papa, I should think a very simple test would be sufficient to expose the falsehood of such a doctrine as that," said Kenneth; "any unusual degree of pain or grief must very soon have set their Stoicism at naught."

"You are mistaken, my dear Kenneth," answered his father; "many of the Stoics lived entirely up to their precepts. It is related of one of them, Epictetus, who lived a great many years after the founder, that his master, one day, began wrenching his leg to put his Stoicism to the test; he smiled, and said, 'Take care, you will break it,"—upon which the other struck it sharply,

and it broke. But the Stoicism of Epictetus was not to be overthrown: his only remark was, 'Did I not tell you that it would break?'"

"Oh! poor, poor Epictetus!" exclaimed Evie, "his master ought to have suffered all the pain himself for such a piece of cruelty."

"Zeno," continued papa, when Evie's indignation had relieved itself, "was, as we are told, and as the gem proves to be true, tall and slender, with a grave countenance and a modest deportment. His constitution was very delicate and feeble; but he acquired health by his extreme abstinence, subsisting entirely on bread, figs, and honey; so that he lived to the age of ninety-eight. After that, however, he one day fell to the ground, and broke his finger, which proof of his own weakness mortified him so much that he struck upon the earth, and inquired of it, 'Why am I thus importuned?' Then, as if the earth had reminded him that the proper moment for enclosing such as he, had arrived, he went home immediately and strangled himself."

"Oh! uncle, how dreadful! Why did he?" exclaimed Flora, in a tone of surprise; "that was not like the dignity becoming a philosopher at all. He did not, surely, *believe* that the earth was really importuning him."

"Indeed, my Flora, it is impossible to judge," answered her uncle; "for we can scarcely have made acquaintance with so many of the heathen sages, without having discovered, that great, and good, and amiable, as some of them were, and wonderful as were the gleams of truth obtained by many, yet their best ideas of right and wrong are strangely obscure and undecided; while of immortality and true religion, every little child brought up to the knowledge of Christianity knows a great deal more than was known to the wisest of them all. And this only tends to convince us, my dear children, that human reason and intellect are entirely powerless in themselves, both to trace out the purposes of God in our behalf, and to teach us how we may profit by these purposes, or obtain an interest in them; and that, unless God had been so good and kind and gracious as to send his Son to reveal all these things to us, we should still be subject to the same errors and mistakes, which we find in the opinions of the ancient philosophers."

"Is this all, papa? Are we to have no more gems to night?" asked Evelyn, in a complaining tone.

"My darling, it is already past ten o'clock," answered her papa, "and I know mamma has

been thinking you ought to be in bed for an hour. To-morrow, or some day soon, we shall return to our box, and then perhaps we may have some of the military heroes of Greece, or the Roman Emperors. Meantime, good night, my Evie, and remember to tell me in the morning which of the philosophers you have dreamt about."

CHAPTER V.

THE FALCON—SHOWING AN INSTANCE OF ONE KIND OF FORTITUDE VERY RARE AMONG YOUNG LADIES.

THE sudden departure of the Ruthvens had deprived the holiday amusements of Glenlee of the social character which they had once bidden fair to carry out to the end; and reduced our party once more to the necessity of confining all their plans of pleasure or occupation within their own little circle. It was much too happy a one, however, and its members were far too closely united, to allow of this circumstance proving a very serious evil; and day after day there was some new plan of enjoyment devised, and carried out with so much spirit and perseverance, that you might have supposed, if the holidays had lasted six months, there would still have remained something in the way of pastime to be done at the end. I am going to tell you of the sports of one day in particular, because, besides its being a very happy one, it was made memorable by a somewhat droll display of bravery and fortitude on the part of Flora.

I hope you have not forgotten, that in the first chapter of this book, I told you of a young gled, or falcon, which Kenneth had managed, during his unfortunate ride with Evelyn from Inverlee,

to procure from the nest in the little craig, and to bring home in his cap, that he might train it up under his papa's superintendence, according to the directions contained in his Book of Falconry. Well, though we have not once had time to notice it, the little gled had been well taken care of all this time, and had been growing up, under Kenneth's careful training, till it was now a strong, bold bird, with a flashing eye, and an aspect of pride and fierceness which sometimes required all its master's skill in the management of its hood and jesses to restrain. It was an object of general interest, in common with the other pets of the household, and Flora was bold enough to use a great many liberties in caressing it. But Evie, whan she saw the great pieces of raw meat which it would devour, and heard its shrill, piercing cry, and watched the little sparks that seemed to kindle up in its eyes when it was provoked, used to tremble, and seek refuge in the soft caresses, and simple domestic tastes, of her darling Una.

The young falcon had made great progress in his education, under Kenneth's tutelage, and he and Roderick had already proved its powers in one or two short flights; but it was in prospect to give them a wider sphere of action some day, by trying it in that low meadow by the side of the loch, through which our party walked one Sunday

evening in our company, and where it was arranged that a poor little wood-pigeon was to be started as the quarry.

After the preparations for this hawking-party had been discussed for a while, it was suggested by somebody that mamma and papa ought both to join it, and to take the little girls; also and then they might as well make it a gipsy-day altogether, and let Hugh and Angus carry their dinner into the wood, and spread it comfortably in one of the pretty glades which abounded there; and they should boil potatoes over a fire kindled among the leaves, and fill their glasses with the water that wimpled over the pebbles beneath the boughs of the ash trees; and, in short, it was to be the most charming day—a period of the most perfect sylvan felicity, that had ever occurred at Glenlee.

Accordingly, the very first fine day that appeared after the plan was proposed, mamma suggested at breakfast-time, that they should take advantage of it, and in less than an hour afterwards the preparations were all completed, and the little party equipped for the walk. Cook had provided a beautiful pigeon pie, with a plentiful addition of sandwiches, fruit, cakes, tartlets, and two bottles of wine—one of ginger, for the little folks, and one of sherry, for papa and mamma;

and Flora and Evelyn had especially ordered a supply of potatoes, and a little saucepan, that they might not be deprived of the pleasure of cooking them with their own hands, in the open air. Hugh was directed to carry all these good things to a particular spot in the wood, by a certain hour, while Angus attended the young falconers in their sport.

Flora and Evie set out, hand in hand, their faces sparkling with pleasure and excitement, but not quite sure whether they should like to see the bold falcon strike down the poor little trembling quarry or not; while papa took his fishing-rod and sketch-book, and mamma her work, resolved to spend an entire day among the woods.

It was the first day of September—the most beautiful month of the year in Scotland—and the very feeling of the air was such as to make the spirits of the little group bound with health and gaiety. There was not a cloud to be seen, though a cool, joyous breeze blew fresh and sweet against their foreheads, and crisped the waters of the loch into little sparkling and foaming billows. Not a tree had changed its tint, but here and there you perceived a tassel of golden leaves, which just served to remind you that autumn was close at hand, though, as yet, it had no influence beyond robbing the air of the sultriness of the earlier sea-

son, and giving to it, in exchange, that fresh inspiriting keenness, which had brought the colour in a glow to the cheeks of Evelyn and Flora.

There could not be a more favourable day for a hawking-party, and Kenneth cut a very picturesque figure, in his long falconer's gloves, with the brave bird that was to furnish their sport, still enveloped in its hood, and perched upon his wrist. They made their way into the middle of the meadow, where the ground was perfectly open and free, and there were no trees among which the gled could wander or entangle itself; and while the merry group occupied the centre of the ground, Angus was despatched to the adjacent coppice, that he might start the quarry from its hiding-place.

While he was gone, and before the young falconer was quite prepared to let go the jesses, a pigeon was observed to rise into the air from the opposite side; and Mr. Mackenzie advised Kenneth to fly his hawk at it without waiting for Angus. Accordingly, the flashing eyes of the gallant favourite were uncovered, Kenneth flung him very skilfully off his wrist, and he rose into the air, keen, swift, and majestically, like an arrow from the bow!

The little girls held their breath to watch him, and, for a while, the whole party kept a profound

silence to observe his flight, till Kenneth, in pursuance of the rules of the sylvan craft, began to utter that peculiar call and whistle, by which the instinct of the bird is said to be directed. Up he went—too happy in his liberty, as it seemed, to occupy himself for a while with pursuing his prey, till, by-and-by, encouraged, or rather invited by the cries of Roderick and Kenneth, he wheeled and circled round in the air, sending the timid little quarry before him in dismay. It was evident that he had fixed his cruel gaze on the pigeon, for, in a very few minutes, the sharp cry of terror which is uniformly uttered by the smaller birds, under the fascination of a bird of prey, reached the ears of our excited party.

It was now that the anxieties and apprehensions of the little girls were roused, and they clapped their hands and screamed, to Kenneth's infinite annoyance, in sympathy and distress for the little pigeon. For a long time its fate was undecided; for the evolutions of the falcon were beautiful, and might have done credit to more profound experience in the art of training than Kenneth could boast: now rising far above the timid prey, yet retaining the entire command of its motions; now floating round it, as if only playing with his own power; and then gradually narrowing his circle, till he came closer and closer upon the poor little

victim, whose doom seemed fixed beyond the intervention of fate.

The excitement of Flora and Evelyn was intense—they could not restrain their feelings;—both seemed as though they could have risen into the air themselves to succour the hapless little quarry; and had Kenneth been less entirely occupied by his own important share of the business, he would scarcely have found occasion to flatter himself on the score of the good wishes offered for his favourite.

At last the fatal moment seemed approaching; the falcon rose straight into the air many fathoms above his prey, and then hung poised above it for a few minutes, while the cry of terror from the pigeon became more and more piteous. The little girls screamed in an agony. The gled made his final swoop, and they were instantly sensible that he had struck the quarry without overpowering it. In another moment every feeling was swallowed up in the start and cry of amazement, with which the group beheld the wounded pigeon fall directly over their heads, and take shelter unhesitatingly in the bosom of little Evelyn.

With what a passion of delight and fondness did not Evie press the panting little sufferer to her breast! and with what wailings of sorrow and compassion did she observe the drops of blood

that had fallen upon her frock! The trembling of the poor fugitive convinced her, however, that it was alive and strong; and while Kenneth was busy luring his wicked favourite to its perch again, the little girls, with infinite care and tenderness, managed to draw forth the cushat from its hiding place to examine into the nature of its wound. But who shall describe the horror—the anguish of Evelyn,—the storm of tears and lamentations with which she discovered that the cushat of the woods,—the little pigeon which Kenneth, and Roderick, and Hector, and even her own papa, had been encouraging and exciting the cruel gled to destroy,—the poor little victim whose fate she had been watching for such a length of time, unconscious of the depth of her own interest in it,—the trembling, bleeding, hunted quarry, which had fled into her bosom for refuge,—was no other than her own darling Una! The excitement of Evelyn on making this discovery was for a time out of all bounds. She could not sustain the horror of the outrage that had been committed; and even Flora's judicious speculations upon the causes of its mysterious flight into the woods failed for a while to elicit the smallest share of her interest or curiosity.

There never was a mystery more unfathomable, —Una flying wild about the forest! Flora counted every shade and spot upon its feathers to prove

that she was not mistaken, that it was actually Una herself that was before her; but the survey only deepened her perplexity. By what strange accident had Margery allowed of so terrible a catastrophe? But Margery was so completely Flora's *beau idéal* of care and faithfulness that she shrank from answering the question, as if something terrible must have happened before Margery could forsake her trust. Then the chain and collar had disappeared; *that* of course was a necessary preliminary to my Lady Una's long flight; but how they had been got rid of was a problem that baffled her whole powers of comprehension.

In the mean time, however, as Una could not speak for herself, it was necessary that her injuries should be inquired into, and repaired as much as possible on the spot. And Evelyn's agonies were something relieved by the discovery, that all the hurt amounted only to a very trifling scratch, which had ceased to bleed, and was soon found to present no alarming symptoms whatever.

It was a cruel interruption to the pleasures of the day; and it was with some difficulty that Evie was prevented from giving up all idea of enjoying the pic-nic, and from going home immediately to mourn over and nurse her ill-used favourite. By-and-by, however, when her mamma had washed

the drops of blood from the delicate feathers, and showed her how completely groundless were all her anxieties; and more particularly when Una herself had begun to recover from her fright, and ruffle her head against her mistress's cheek, and to coo forth her gratitude and satisfaction, Evelyn began to take heart again, dried up her tears, and after two or three refusals agreed at last to comply with her mamma's proposal, and to commit Una to her work-basket that old Hugh might carry her back to the house, whither he was bound on some necessary errand, and to deliver her over again to Margery.

Meantime the boys were fully engrossed by the endeavours to recall the gled, in which they had been joined by Angus, and which tempted them far away along the margin of the lake, unconscious all the while of the extent of wrong which the fierce bird had so narrowly escaped committing. Papa had come up to bestow his sympathy and commiseration on Una, and to arrange his fishing-rod for an hour's sport; and mamma took out her work and her little book, and seated herself upon a mossy stone near the water, that she might be near enough to chat to him.

By this time Evelyn's distress was somewhat subsided. The steadiness of old Hugh's guardianship, and her own entire confidence in the skill of

Margery's attendance upon the poor little patient, had done wonders towards re-assuring her. And when Flora proposed that they should take a stroll into the wood together, and try whether they could not succeed in gathering a dish of blackberries for dessert to their gipsy dinner, she assented, with only a little diminution of her accustomed glee. Mamma agreed to the plan, on condition that they should not venture too far away; and papa lent them his basket to carry their fruit, in consideration of its being quite *new*, agreeing to put his own fish upon a string.

Even after they had entered upon their expedition, however, the mystery of Una's appearance continued the favourite subject of conversation between the little girls, and Evelyn had some difficulty to keep the tears from springing again at the recollection that her beautiful little chain and collar, the very pride and delight of her heart, had probably disappeared for ever.

"How Una could have got them slipped off I cannot imagine, Flo', can you?" inquired she, as the subject was turned over between them: "don't you remember what a great deal of trouble it cost us to fasten them on at first, and how she fluttered about, and got so frightened? And then you know there were two clasps, one for the collar, and one at the foot to fasten the chain. I

cannot think how Una could have *slipped out* either her head or her foot even among the rough branches in the wood; and I am sure she could not have undone the clasps, clever as she is."

"No, that she could not," answered Flo'; "I am just wondering how *any* one who did not know the secret of those clasps could have unfastened them: do you think, dear Evie, that it is possible Una could have been *stolen?*"

"Stolen!" repeated Evelyn, in dismay, "oh, dear no—surely not, Flo'; how could any one get into Margery's room, and steal her from the window?"

"Well, but you know Margery carries the cage out to the gravel beside the back door every morning to clean it, and she was so busy putting up the dinner-things in the baskets to-day, that I do not think it was done till after we set out; and don't you remember, Evie, that just as we were coming down the avenue, we met a gipsy woman in a red cloak going up, and she made us a low curtsey, but did not stay to ask for anything in her way. I should not be at all surprised to find that Una had been hopping about the gravel when she arrived at the kitchen door, and that she had been tempted to steal her just for the sake of the glittering collar."

This picture of the outrage committed upon

the delicate person of her pet seemed to renew the worst part of Evelyn's sufferings, and she began to complain of Margery's carelessness—of the waywardness of fate in having destined Una's toilette to be deferred on this dangerous day above all others—of the unprincipled character of gipsies in general, and of this gipsy in the red cloak in particular. At last Flora interposed with a few words of comfort.

"But do you know, Evie, I shall not be at all sorry to hear that the gipsy woman stole the chain, because I think it much more likely that we may recover it in that case, than if Una had slipped it off among the woods. Only think how impossible it would be for us ever to find it among all these stones, and briars, and tangled grass."

"But only think how impossible it will be for us ever to recover it from that terrible gipsy," rejoined Evie: "you know gipsies are never very long in the same place, and very likely this woman will have taken her departure before we can have time to seek her out."

"Oh, no, Evelyn, dear," continued Flo', "for don't you remember hearing Mr. Drummond tell uncle, one day, that a very large encampment of gipsies had taken up their quarters somewhere—I don't remember where he said—and that he

thought it most probable we should have them as neighbours for the winter. Now, I am quite sure that if uncle, or Mr. Drummond, or some one old and wise enough, you know, to manage the business, were only to take it in hand, I do think we might recover the collar and chain."

Flo's reasoning seemed in the eyes of Evelyn sufficiently plausible to afford very substantial ground of comfort; and after a little more conversation, in which the influence of Flora's strong and sanguine mind as usual gave the tone to poor Evie's timidity, the search after blackberries commenced with unimpaired activity.

The excitement of this pursuit was soon engrossing enough to drive away all gloomy or painful forebodings. The blackberries were so plentiful, that the fishing-basket was in a fair way of being speedily filled, and in the intervals of plucking and eating them, there was always some object of interest or another presenting itself to keep alive the enjoyment. This wood, as I told you once before, was full of game, and the little rabbits were putting out their pink noses and their sharp little ears every moment from some snug hiding-place to peep at the little intruders upon their solitude, while even the shy squirrels cracked their nuts on the topmost boughs of the trees, without showing the smallest uneasiness.

By-and-by, Flora caught a magnificent dragon-fly with bright blue wings and a shining body, and she kept it in her veil quite snug and comfortable, where it had plenty of room to breathe and move about, till she should have shown it to her aunt, and asked some questions about its nature and habits. Then Evelyn came upon a nest of lizards that were all cosily domiciled under the hollow side of a stone covered with soft moss, and a long time was passed in watching the quick whisking motions of the little ones as they darted out and in from behind the stone, and the green and gold speckled coat of the mamma as she sat demurely upon the edge, and looked at them with a pair of eyes that glanced and flashed like two sparks of diamond. Then some curious funguses or *agarics* of bright scarlet attracted them, and Flora plucked some damp moss from the edge of a little rill to preserve them fresh till they should return to dinner; and then there was some delicious honeysuckle, which loaded the air with its odour, without being discoverable to the curious eyes of the little adventurers, and of course the enjoyment of hunting it out and pulling long garlands from the trees round which it was twining could not be resisted, and the consequence was, that in the chase they wandered much further on than they were at all aware of,—

so much so, that when Evie stopped and begged that they might sit down for a few moments to rest, the little girls found themselves in the immediate neighbourhood of a broad green glade, which they well knew to occupy the centre of the wood.

This discovery, however, operated only to enhance the enjoyment of their independent ramble, and they both flung themselves down on a patch of soft turf, over which the sun came glinting at intervals through the thick foliage, the two happiest creatures in that forest, where every living thing which they had seen, looked as though it had been made for the purpose of being happy and no other.

"Look, Flo'," said Evie, after they had enjoyed their pretty resting-place for a moment or two, "don't you see a beautiful little wreath of blue smoke rising up above the trees there, over in the glade, so light and delicate, that you might imagine a giant to be lying down among the wood, and that to be his breathing."

"A giant!" repeated Flora, laughing, "I don't imagine a giant's breath so delicate as that—I would rather call it the smoke from a fairy village; but what can it be, Evie, smoking in the middle of the wood?—they don't burn weeds or whins among the plantation, do they?"

Evelyn could not recollect whether such a

proceeding was allowable in wood-craft or not, so they continued to watch the floating dreamy-looking motions of the smoke, without being able to determine from whence it proceeded. Flora, however, was not a young lady who ever endured the pains of curiosity a moment longer than was necessary; she suddenly rose, declaring that she was resolved to go and explore from what source the blue smoke could arise.

"Oh! please, don't, dearest Flo'," remonstrated Evie, "we are a great way from mamma and papa already, and I am afraid if you go on any further, they will be quite anxious about us before we can get back again; besides, it might be something that would frighten you, all alone as you are, dear Flo'."

"Pooh! I have only to go and push the bushes aside, and look in upon the glade," was Flora's brave rejoinder; "I will return to you in three minutes."

And before Evie could add a word more, she had bounded off to the thick bushes on the edge of the great glade. A very little squeezing took Flo' to the other side of the barrier which these afforded, and there, sure enough, was displayed the true source of the column of smoke, certainly far enough removed, both from a giant in repose and a fairy village, and yet so very beau-

tiful and picturesque was the scene, that Flora stood for a few moments in mute delight, her painter's eye completely captivated by its romantic effect. The glade was merely a small open space in the wood, which the trees enclosed on every side without encroaching upon it, and through the middle of which ran a clear little noisy stream, while the ground on both its banks was covered with bright flowery herbage. On the opposite side of the burn from where Flora stood, about six or eight small tents had been erected, such as you, my dear children, must have seen, if you were ever in the neighbourhood of a gipsy encampment,—low little odd-looking tents they were, and covered either with old blankets, or with the chequered tartan plaids of Scotland; and here and there amongst them was a fire of boughs and peats kindled, and a triangle formed over it of three long sticks, stuck in the ground, to support a kettle that was hung from the midst. There was a funny-looking little cart resting on one side, well packed with articles of white tin, such as saucepans, tea-kettles, grid-irons, and so on, besides baggage of other kinds piled very skilfully. Near the edge of the burn, there was an old horse grazing, in company with one or two donkeys, whose panniers lay beside the cart empty; and between them and the tents,

just on the slope of the ground, several very pretty ragged black-eyed children were playing, crowing and laughing in a most vociferous manner, while a woman, whom Flora well remembered having seen before, was occupied near one of the fires in plucking the feathers from a bird that looked like a pheasant, previous to the operation of cooking it for dinner.

Flora stood for a while within the shelter of the bushes to admire this scene; for the little village of tents, and above all the beautiful and secluded nook which sheltered them, formed a most striking and curious picture. Brave as she was, however, Flo' was not very desirous of attracting the attention of the gipsy woman, while Evelyn and herself continued so far separated from the rest of their party; and after a few minutes passed in the survey of the snug encampment, upon which she had fallen so unexpectedly, she pushed her way through the bushes again, and returned to Evelyn with a face full of excitement and importance.

"Well, Evie, I have discovered the gipsy settlement," exclaimed she, as she approached the mossy couch where Evelyn was stretched at full length; "I have found out the tents, they are all pitched together so cosily under the trees, on the other side of the burn; and

our friend whom we met in the avenue is cooking the dinner close to one of them. Won't you come and take a peep at the camp from between the bushes? you cannot think how pretty it looks; and after we have both had another look we will run off to the loch side, and tell uncle all our suspicions about this gipsy woman having stolen Una's chain, and then, perhaps, he will come just now and order her to deliver it up."

"Oh! dear Flo', let us go to him immediately," said poor Evie, becoming pale with fear, at the notion of their proximity to the formidable gipsy; "oh! do not let us go back to the bushes, dearest Flo'; I should be terribly frightened even to look at those gipsies from a distance, so long as we are quite alone—please, please, let us go back to mamma and papa directly!"

"Pooh! you little frightened thing," returned Flora, laughing, "what possible harm can they do us?—do you think any of them would dare even to speak uncivilly either to you or me? though we were to venture quite among their tents. I am sure I should not be at all afraid to encounter that gipsy even if I were quite alone."

I cannot tell whether Flora were in jest or earnest when she made this boast, but it seemed as though her courage were destined to be very soon put to the test, for she had scarcely pro-

nounced the words before the bushes were once more thrust apart, and the identical gipsy woman, red cloak and all, strode across the little patch of green sward, to the spot were the two girls were standing.

Evie became in an instant so deadly pale, and began to tremble so violently, that it became an additional subject of alarm to Flora, the prospect of seeing her fall to the ground, while Flo' herself flushed crimson and her eyes sparkled with excitement and resolution.

The woman looked very disagreeable and bold; she had a handsome, sunburnt face, with large black eyes that glittered with cunning and impertinence; and the saucy insolent smile with which she advanced towards the little wanderers bore an expression very different from the cringing humility of her obeisance to them and their mamma in the avenue. Flora, however, was not at all a personage to be daunted by an unpleasant exterior, and she stood her ground gallantly while the gipsy advanced, and returned her impudent stare with a look of cool inquiry.

"Well, my pretty dears," said the woman, with a strong Irish accent, when she had approached quite near them, "and so you have lost your way in the woods, have you? and you don't know how you are to get back again to your papa

and mamma, is not that it? But never mind, I'll take care of you, and show you the proper road home—you need not be at all afraid."

You may think that these words sounded very kind, and not at all such as ought to have alarmed the little girls; but if you had seen the bold insolent look, and heard the familiar tone of the speaker, you would not have been surprised that Evelyn at least trembled more violently than ever, and clung to Flora as if she were afraid of falling down. Flora, however, did not appear to lose her courage for a moment; she eyed the woman very contemptuously, and then replied—

"Oh, no, you are quite mistaken, we are perfectly well acquainted with this wood, and not at all likely to lose our way in it; we have only been picking a dish of blackberries for dinner, and our papa and mamma are quite close at hand to take care of us."

As Flora expected, the gipsy looked round a little anxiously upon being told of the near neighbourhood of people so formidable as papas and mammas, and when she spoke again it was in a much more fawning and civil tone.

"Oh! I'm very glad to hear that, I saw you looking through the bushes from the other side of the burn just now, and I thought you had lost

your way, and so I came across, thinking, perhaps you would be the better of a convoy as far as the great house in the holm."

"Was it you that I saw coming up the avenue this morning, as we were all going out," asked Flo', perceiving that the woman would retain her civil tone as long as she saw that the little girls considered themselves safe.

"Yes, my little lady," answered the gipsy, and her voice immediately fell into that sort of whine which beggars usually assume when they hope to work upon people's compassion, "it was just me. I went up, just to ask the cook if she would give me any bit scrap of broken meat to give to the little *craturs* over the burn for their dinner—not a morsel have they had this blessed day before."

Flo' remembered the boisterous merriment of the group at the burn-side, and did not think it at all like the demeanour of starving children; and then she called to mind the fat pheasant, upon which her friend the gipsy had been so lately at work, and thought that even if cook had refused to give her anything, she would not have been much at a loss for a dinner either for the little *craturs* or for herself. It was quite evident to Flo', that the gipsy woman was a person of no manner of principle, and she felt more and more certain that the chain and collar of the kidnapped Una were snug in

her possession. A single moment's reflection suggested a plan to Flora, whereby she might at least *try* to recover them, if she had only nerve enough to preserve her composure and indifference of manner to the gipsy, and to prevent her from finding out that Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie were at least a long mile away. She addressed a few laughing words to Evelyn, to keep up her spirits, and then turned round to listen to the long harangue which the gipsy had been addressing to them.

"I am sure such a pretty little lady as you are, would like your fortune told," said she, in a smooth, flattering tone; "if you will *cross my hand* with silver, I will tell you anything you would like to know, for I can read fortunes out of the stars, and such fortunes as those are always sure to come true: come now, give me that little white hand of yours, and I will read your fortune out of the palm."

"Thank you," answered Flora, with an air of perfect sincerity, "that is just what I wanted; I have one or two questions to ask you about my fortune, and I will be very much obliged to you if you can read it right."

And to Evie's indescribable terror and surprise, Flora took a shilling from her pocket, and held it out in her open palm to the gipsy, that she might accept it, and read her fortune in return.

"Here's a lucky palm," exclaimed the woman, in a voice of delight, and peering into the lines that crossed each other in Flora's little hand: "here's a coach-and-six—and a great lord for a husband—and pearls and diamonds to wear—and a horse to ride upon—and a grand house to live in, with parks round it, and servants running about in every direction."

"Oh! that is charming!" answered Flora, pretending great satisfaction at this magnificent fortune; "but I don't want a coach-and-six just at present; I have lost something, and I want to know where I am most likely to find it!"

"Ah! that is a very difficult part of my trade," answered the gipsy, assuming a mysterious tone, and shaking her head solemnly, "that needs another consultation with the stars; I must have my hand crossed again, before I can answer that."

Flora placed a silver groat in the gipsy's hand, quite determined to carry out her experiment, though it should cost her all that remained of her allowance.

"And now I must know *what* you have lost, *where* you lost it, and *when* you lost it," continued the fortune-teller, after she had pocketed the money.

"Well, then," answered Flora, still striving to preserve her brave deportment, though it must

be confessed that she did feel a little anxious about the effect of her stratagem, and very desirous that her uncle and aunt should come in the same direction in which she and Evelyn had wandered, to seek them out.

"Well, it is a little bird that I have lost, and if you could help me to find out where it is, it would save a great deal of trouble in searching for it."

The gipsy looked very hard at Flo' as she uttered these courageous words, as though she would fain have discovered whether they conveyed any suspicion of the real cause of the bird's disappearance; but Flo' commanded her countenance with admirable fortitude, and looked as simple, and as eager for information, as if there were no suspicions in her mind.

"I think the stars have decreed," answered the gipsy, looking quite satisfied, "that your bird will be at home when you return; I can tell you this, even without knowing when it was lost; so you see my art goes further than I promised it would."

"Oh! but I forgot to tell you," said Flora, "that I had found the bird; only, when it was first lost, it had on a little gold collar, with a chain attached to it: now, when the bird came back, the collar was amissing—it is the collar I am anxious to know about, and as you can, of course,

divine by your art where it is to be found, I will give you a crown-piece if you will tell me."

Again the gipsy fixed her great black eyes on Flora's face, with a fierce expression of curiosity, and again did Flo' withstand the gaze, like a heroine. It was quite evident that the gipsy did not at all suspect the depth of her young patroness's policy.

"I can quite easily tell you all that you want to know," said she, looking very mysterious, "but I must consult the stars to-night first; give me the crown-piece, and if you will meet me here to-morrow at this same hour of the day, I will tell you where you will find your bird's collar."

"Oh! no, no, that is far too long to wait," answered Flo', with a look of pretended indifference; "the gentleman at the great house, my uncle, Mr. Mackenzie, will have sent people everywhere about in search of it by that time: I am quite certain to find it sooner or later, and I only asked you because I fancied you would be able to tell me immediately."

"Well, if I make my calculations just now, perhaps I may be able to tell you immediately," answered the gipsy; "but a gold collar must be very valuable—it is worth more than a crown-piece—you must give me a piece of gold."

"No, I cannot give you any more than the

crown, because that is all I have got remaining; and my little cousin has no money in her pocket at all; but if you will wait a very few minutes, my uncle and aunt will be here, or if you choose to come with us to meet them, perhaps they may give you half a guinea."

Now Flo' only said this, as you may suppose, to frighten the gipsy with the idea of her uncle and aunt being close at hand. She had very little hope herself of seeing them appear in so short a time, but she was shrewd enough to believe that the fortune-teller would have but small inclination to wait for their arrival, in the hope of receiving half a guinea for her information.

"I must go back to the young ones—I have no time to wait," said the gipsy, "but I can tell you where you will find the bird's collar; go along that path that leads through the wood, and count the oak-trees as you walk forward, and when you come to the fifth oak-tree, stop and search among the stones and grass at the foot of it—your bird's collar is at the foot of the fifth oak-tree—and now give me the crown-piece, for I am in a hurry."

Flora was just on the point of handing over her crown-piece, concluding that the gipsy had hidden the collar in the spot which she had named; but a moment's reflection convinced her of her folly, and showed her the great probability that the

woman was only telling her a falsehood; and that having once got possession of the money she would soon escape to her encampment, thus keeping snug possession of both the money and the collar, while Flo' was absent on this wild-goose chase to the fifth oak-tree.

"No, I will not give you the money till it is found," answered Flora, courageously, "because although you tell me that you have your information from the stars, still it is quite possible that you may be mistaken, and that the collar may not be in that place after all: and I should be very much disappointed, and very hardly used, if I were to give you all my money, and not find my collar after all."

The woman looked very impatient at these words; and Flora quaked in the midst of all her bravery at the fierce expression of her face, as she made a step forward, as if to seize upon the money by force. Flo' held it tight, however, and in spite of her alarm managed to say, with great apparent coolness:—

"My uncle would be very angry with me besides, and would probably go over the burn immediately, and make you give him my crown-piece back again."

In a few minutes it seemed as if the gipsy had made up her mind, that the best thing she could

do was to deliver up her stolen goods immediately for the reward offered. It was evident that she did not by any means relish the prospect of coming into collision with Mr. Mackenzie under any circumstances, and after a few moments' hesitation she said:—

"I have no time to walk to the oak-tree; so, as you are so obstinate, I must use my arts to conjure your bird's collar here."

And she began immediately to turn herself round in a circle, and to mutter some strange words that Flora could not understand. But she could perceive that in the midst of all her revolutions she kept fidgetting in her pocket, as if she were in search of something, and at last she unfastened her cloak, and let it fall on the ground. Then she directed Flora to look under a particular corner of it, and see whether the fairies had brought the collar as she desired them.

Flo' advanced and lifted the corner of the red cloak; Evie still clinging to her, partly from the terror of the adventure, which she had by no means begun to surmount, and partly from curiosity to see the effect of the conjuration. It was perfectly successful. On lifting up the corner specified, there lay the pretty little gold collar, glittering in the eyes of the successful little politician with a pleasanter sparkle than it had

ever worn before. And strange to say, in spite of the extreme lightness and delicacy of the fabric, neither collar nor clasp had sustained even the injury of a bruise. In a moment the crown-piece was in the hands of the gipsy, and before the girls had well lifted the recovered trinket from its resting-place among the grass, she had pushed once more through the bushes and disappeared.

A happy pair were Flora and Evelyn, when they resumed their basket of blackberries, and, full of the joy and triumph of their recent encounter, skipped along the path that led them to the rendezvous where they were to dine.

It took them less than one quarter of the time to return that their ramble through the wood had occupied; and yet they found their mamma in the utmost anxiety at their protracted absence, and preparing to set out herself in quest of them; even papa had finished his sport, and the boys returned with their recaptured falcon.

The cloth was laid on some short mossy grass under a tree; and nothing could look more charming than the appearance of dinner. The plates, and forks, and spoons, and silver cups looked so funny, lying in close company with ferns and wild flowers. Then the wine had been placed in a cool spring that it might recover from

the heat to which it was exposed in its journey to the wood; and at a little distance there was a bright fire burning among the stones; and the little stewpan full of potatoes just waiting their arrival, before Hugh should put it on to boil; and beside the burn Angus was busily engaged with a knife, cleaning and preparing papa's trout, which were also to be cooked on Hugh's fire. Altogether, there never was such a scene of sylvan gaiety.

"Well, come along," said papa, as he came to meet them, and lifted the basket of blackberries from Flora's shoulders; "we thought you had become the Babes in the Wood in your own persons, and were just going to take one peep of you before the robins had quite covered you up. Come and give an account of yourselves."

The first hint of their adventure with the gipsy was sufficient to engross the whole attention of the circle; and by-and-by the woods rang again to the shouts of laughter which followed the details of Flora's gallant and sagacious exploit.

Evelyn had by this time quite recovered from her fright; and the excitement it had left behind proved a wonderful addition to the spirit with which she occasionally supplied an incident,

or a word, in the dialogue which Flora had omitted.

At first Mrs. Mackenzie trembled at the danger they had run in encountering the gipsy woman alone in the middle of the wood, but Flora's self-command and fortitude, and the prudence and sagacity she had exercised, were soon the only topics discussed: and the dinner was enlivened to its very close by the interest and amusement afforded to every one by the young ladies' adventures in the wood.

"I must confess, Flo', that no heroine among the Amazons of old could have shown greater skill or bravery, either in defence or attack," said her uncle, when his mirth had a little subsided; "I think you deserve a gold chain and collar yourself, and a new order of feminine knighthood as the most appropriate distinction for such gallant conduct."

"Una's, at least, will always remain a trophy of your fortitude and prudence, my Flo'," said her aunt, with a smile, "which not only succeeded in recovering your lost property, but saved both yourself and your companion from at least a great deal of impertinence, which the gipsy would doubtless have offered, had you *both* presented as great an appearance of cowardice as my poor Evie.

It is a very useful lesson, my dear children, and cannot be too soon learned, that self-command and the power of suppressing our own emotions is the best means whereby we can gain a superiority over *danger* in every shape, and more especially prevent the advantage which designing people never fail to take of our weakness."

CHAPTER VI.

SHOWING AN INSTANCE OF ANOTHER KIND OF FORTITUDE, VERY RARE EVEN AMONG THE BRAVEST.

THE last day but one of the Midsummer holidays had arrived, and, somewhat to the disappointment of Flora and Evelyn, the boys had determined to spend it in a fishing excursion to some distant loch or river among the mountains. Their disappointment, however, and the prospect of a solitary day, was speedily dissipated, by Mr. Mackenzie announcing to the little girls that if they could be all ready equipped by one o'clock, he would take them with him in the new sailing-boat as far as the foot of the lake, where he was going on business.

Now it happened that a sail in this particular boat was an especial treat to Flora and Evelyn. They were quite accustomed to sail about, with their papa and brothers, in the little skiffs and row-boats which are common among the Highland lochs, but this vessel was a new purchase of Mr. Mackenzie's—a beautiful little tiny yacht, painted bright green, with its name, "The Naiad," in letters of gold upon the stern, and a pretty little snow-white sail, which, when the breeze had filled it, and it was all swelled out, made

the little boat look like a swan floating on the waters.

My little English readers, probably, do not know that it is much more dangerous to sail in a pretty boat of this kind, on a Highland loch, girt about with tall mountains, than on a fine, broad, open, English river; and if you would like to know the reason, it is this: On a smooth open river, like the Thames, or the Mersey, or the Humber, where there are no mountains to intercept the wind, it blows smooth and steady, all in the same direction over the bosom of the water; and people, when they are sailing, can quite easily manage to keep always in that part where the wind will *assist* them, and not be in any danger of blowing upon them in the wrong direction, so as to baffle their progress, or perhaps even to upset them. But in a Highland loch, where the high hills surround it on every side, the wind cannot blow smooth and steady, but comes rushing down through any crevice or opening in the mountains, just wherever it can; and so people cannot possibly be prepared for it at all times, and the consequence is, that occasionally it will come upon a poor little boat with a gust so sudden and unexpected, that it is swept over and upset with as much ease as though it had been an egg-shell. In little boats, without sails of course, there is no such danger as

this, because the wind has very little effect upon them, and so this is the reason why it was so great a novelty to the little girls to be allowed a sail with Mr. Mackenzie in the Naiad.

It was a beautiful day, so bright, and still, and sultry, that even the fresh September breeze had died away, and left the surface of the water as smooth and burnished as though the loch had been one great mirror, which reflected every leaf and flower upon its banks. This made Mr. Mackenzie decide upon taking the little girls with him. He thought there could not surely be any danger in sailing on such a calm and motionless sea; and though mamma looked a little anxious, from the circumstance of Angus having gone with the boys, and Mr. Mackenzie having, in consequence, everything to do in the management of the Naiad himself, yet the entreaties of the little girls, the opinion of papa, and the beauty of the morning, combined at last to put her scruples to flight; and because she was too busy to accompany them, she merely took down her parasol from its peg in the hall, and walked with them to the margin of the lake, to witness their embarkation.

The girls were in the highest spirits, as you may suppose. Flora, as the best sailor, was placed at the helm, where she had already been several

times honoured by the position of pilot, and could answer to her uncle's technical directions, such as "luff," "port," "steady," and so on, with wonderful precision; while little Evie was entrusted with a paper of biscuit and a flask of sherry, with which she was to refresh the mariners when they flagged in their duties. Mamma stood watching them till they had nearly gained the middle of the loch, and nothing could look more beautiful than the little Naiad, as she floated onward, at the impulse of the lazy breeze, cutting the smooth, still waters with her sharp prow, and leaving a long wake of sparkling silver behind her, to break the bright reflection of her own image upon the water. She looked like a little painted butterfly, and Mrs. Mackenzie stood for many minutes watching her graceful motions, and listening to the clear laugh of the little girls, as it was borne to her on the shore.

The loch was about five miles long, and the sail to the farm-house, where Mr. Mackenzie's business lay, occupied them, this very calm day, about an hour and a half. But there were a thousand subjects of interest to fill up the time, and if it had been twice the length, Flora and Evelyn would still have thought it very short indeed. There was, first of all, the rising of the little trout to the surface of the lake, that they might catch the

flies that were sporting about; and sometimes they would leap so far out of the water, and make so loud and large a splash, that little Evelyn would give quite a start of surprise, at which sign of timidity Flo' never failed to laugh heartily. Then they passed a bed of water-lilies—beautiful, pure, delicate flowers—which, I dare say, you have often seen growing on the edge of a pond, with broad flat leaves, so thick and substantial, that Flora used to amuse herself sometimes by gathering them, and making them quite dry and flat, till they resembled a thin slip of wood, and then writing sentences from grave books, or little verses of Scripture, or stanzas from favourite poems, on their surface, with a large needle, or the point of a pen-knife; and these she called sybilline leaves, while she used to declare that if she were left on a desert island, like Robinson Crusoe, she would supply herself with books made of water-lily leaves. A great many of these favourite leaves were pulled up, and landed safely on board, as the little Naiad floated through them; and then the sailing-party arrived just under a great black rock, where there was a famous echo; and the girls woke it up by shouting out odd words or sentences, and watching the ludicrous distinctness with which they were repeated by the echo, two or three times over. But the most singular thing of

all to listen to, was the echo of their laughter: Flora said it sounded exactly as if some spirit were bound a prisoner in the heart of the rock, and were mocking them by its superhuman merriment. They would have lingered a long time under the rock, putting questions to the echo, but papa hurried them away, lest they should be detained by his business, and not get home in time for dinner: so they finished their sail without any interruption, and perfectly well amused by the beautiful variety of the shore, as they floated past it—by the excellent view of the lake and the mountains—and the occasional visits of the swallows that came skimming over the water, and from time to time would dip their wings deep down in it, as if to refresh themselves by a bath in the cool waves.

At last a large white bird made its appearance, wheeling and circling in the air, with a restless and unsatisfied sort of flight, and uttering all the while a sharp, melancholy cry, such as Flora remembered to have heard before, but could not for a while recollect where.

"What sort of bird is that, uncle?" inquired she, "it is not quite so big as a heron, or I should have thought it had been one, from its shrill, wailing kind of cry. It must surely be either hungry or unhappy about something, it circles

about in such a restless unquiet way. I never saw a bird like it before."

"It is a sea-gull, my Flo'," returned her uncle, "and I am not at all disposed to give it a welcome just at this moment;" and he got up and looked anxiously all round the sky.

"Why not, uncle? Is it a bird of prey as well as the heron? Is it very cruel and rapacious?" asked Flora. "What is the reason you do not like its appearance?"

"It is a bird of prey," answered Mr. Mackenzie; "that is, it subsists generally on the small fish which abound in deep water: and for that reason its ordinary habitation is the bare rocks and shelves of the sea-shore; as you might guess from its being called a *sea-gull*. But it is not on account of its peculiar habits that I am sorry to see it on Loch Lee; it is because the country people generally consider it an indication of stormy weather, when a gull makes its way up to the lochs."

"Indeed, uncle! What is the reason? Why should the storm send the sea-gulls up here? is it that they may find shelter among our mountains?" inquired Flo' again.

"It is generally *before* a storm that the gulls make their appearance so far inland," answered her uncle, "and the reason is said to be, that the

creature's instinct having warned it of the approach of the tempest, which will make its food difficult to obtain among the stormy billows, it takes a flight over the lochs that it may subsist for a while upon the trout and minnows which they furnish."

"I hope it is not a sign that we shall have a storm to-day, papa," said Evie, looking a little frightened. "See, there is the long white streak which Kenneth says *never* appears on the surface of the water, without proving a sign of bad weather. And there are a great many more sheep at the foot of the hills than there were when we left home. Do you think we shall have a storm, papa?"

"Not before we reach Achleskine at all events," answered her papa, with a smile, "as we are not more than ten minutes' sail from it, and the clouds do not look very threatening at present."

And Evie laughed at her own fears, as her papa pointed upwards to the bright blue sunny skies over head.

"If Mr. Davidson gives it as his opinion that we had better not sail home, you must only make up your minds for a long walk, young ladies," added Mr. Mackenzie. "Do you think you are up to a matter of four miles?"

The little girls promised great things in the

way of activity and good-will, though they had never attempted so long a walk before; and in a few minutes the Naiad was steered by Mr. Mackenzie's skilful pilotage into a little creek, which formed the landing-place of Achleskine.

Mr. Davidson, the person whom, I dare say, you will remember as having once outraged Flora's notions of the minor moralities, by laying his spurs upon her aunt's work-table, received the party, at his house of Achleskine, with so much kindness, and the girls passed a whole hour with him so happily that they both felt quite sorry when it was over. He lived quite alone, and was almost as fond of pets as his youthful visitors themselves. Accordingly every room had some dumb favourite in it to enliven the solitude of its master, and to improve its education under his superintendence.

In the dining-room, for instance, to the girls' extreme delight and amazement, there was a little hare sound asleep on the rug, and though naturally, as you know, the most timid and untameable of all animals, it did not manifest the smallest alarm at the intrusion of strangers, and allowed Evie to caress and frolic with it exactly as though it had been a playful kitten. But something still more extraordinary about this hare was, that on the rug beside it, and apparently on the very best

terms imaginable, there was a fine old pointer lying asleep. Now you know that pointers are both by nature and inclination the bitterest enemies of hares, and are always trained up and used for the purpose of hunting them. So you see Mr. Davidson must have taken a great deal of pains to reconcile these two natural enemies, and to domesticate them in this peaceable way with each other.

There were, besides these, an innumerable variety of cats, and dogs, and birds, in Mr. Davidson's house, all so tame that they afforded Flora and Evelyn a world of amusement. And when they were quite satisfied with the acquaintance of the in-door favourites, he took them out to his farm-yard; and the flocks of poultry, of geese, and turkeys, and guinea-fowl, and pea-fowl, and water-fowl, and every sort of curious fowl, that has ever been domesticated in this country, were such as to fill the little girls with surprise and delight. What they admired most of all, however, was a beautiful brood of little chick pheasants which had been hatched by a common hen, and which were now stalking about the poultry-yard, fine strong birds, and apparently quite impressed with the notion of their own aristocratic dignity. These young pheasants were so beautiful, and Flora and Evelyn were so enchanted with them, that Mr. Davidson ordered a

nice little wicker-coop to be brought out, and two of the very finest to be put into it, and carried to Glenlee for the young ladies—a gold one for Flora, and a silver one for Evelyn; and that they might not prove troublesome to them on board the Naiad, a little boy was despatched immediately to carry them home on foot. I can assure you, that after this day Flora was one of the stoutest defenders of Mr. Davidson's minor moralities.

By this time the sky had lost something of its radiance, and the air began to feel a little chilly and bleak, and altogether the day wore a very different aspect to what it had presented a few hours previously. Mr. Davidson gave it as his opinion, however, that there would neither be rain nor wind before the evening, and that Mr. Mackenzie need entertain no apprehension about the safety of his precious little freight, in their voyage home. He was very anxious, at the same time, to press upon their acceptance the services of one of his farm-servants, in case they might stand in need of a stronger arm than Flora's at the helm; but as the farm-people were all busily engaged in bringing home the corn and barley from the fields, and in storing it up in great ricks for the winter, Mr. Mackenzie could not think of interrupting their labours, and therefore persisted in declining Mr. Davidson's kind offer.

In a little while they were all embarked once more, in high spirits, and very much delighted with their pleasant visit. The waters were dim now and rippling, and the skies were covered with grey clouds, but the glee of the little sailors continued quite unabated, and they prattled on about Mr. Davidson's pets and Mr. Davidson's kindness, totally regardless of the trout, and the swallows, and the water-lilies, and the echo, and all the curious things which had awakened their interest and curiosity in their sail down the loch.

Mr. Mackenzie attended to all their appeals for a while—declared his opinion of Mr. Davidson's patience, in having trained the young hare to habits so contrary to its nature—and praised his generosity and politeness, in the gift of the little pheasants, with as much zest and spirit as his young auditors could desire. By-and-by, however, he seemed a little pre-occupied when they addressed him, and much more engaged in trimming and arranging the sail, and in watching the appearance of the clouds, and the direction of the wind, than either in listening or replying to the remarks of his young companions. He took the helm into his own hands, and the circumstance of being called upon to resign it first roused the attention of Flora to the state of the weather.

It was dark, and cold, and bleak, and every now

and then a gust of dreary and moaning wind would set the little Naiad scudding over the waves, with a rocking, dancing motion, apparently much more agreeable to Flora and Evelyn than to Mr. Mackenzie.

In this way they advanced about half-way up the lake, and still the young folks chatted on, and enjoyed their sail, without giving any heed to the possibility of danger. But the threatening aspect of the weather, meantime, continued to increase, and the grave looks of Mr. Mackenzie to keep pace with it.

"I am afraid we shall scarcely escape a squall, my dear children," said he, in rather an anxious tone. "I almost wish I had accepted Mr. Davidson's offer of sending Donald, for I find considerable difficulty in managing alone, and I am afraid even your seamanship, my Flo', will scarcely avail with an arm no stronger than that which exercises it."

"I had no difficulty at all in moving the helm before, uncle," answered Flo', "and if you will only tell me exactly the proper *direction*, I am sure I shall be strong enough to turn it still, in spite of those great billows."

Her uncle promised to put her powers to the test, whenever he found it necessary to quit the post of helmsman for a moment, and in the mean-

time they held on their way, driven along by the wind at a rate which promised very soon to take them beyond the reach of danger.

Flora's "great billows," however, gradually assumed an appearance very much in accordance with her designation of them, and curled their foaming heads round the prow of the little ship, with a battering force, and a roaring and hissing noise, that could not fail of producing its effect upon the nerves of the little crew. The wind was now roaring and shrieking among the rigging, and its fury might be seen in the tempestuous appearance it had given to the whole face of nature; the clouds had turned from grey to black, and were flying over the sky in a very terrific and threatening manner, while the tall trees on the shore, whenever the little group found time to send a glance in that direction, were bent, and twisted, and distorted, by the violence of the tempest.

Flora and Evelyn talked a long time, as if to sustain their own spirits and Mr. Mackenzie's—remarked how curious and unexpected the sudden change in the weather was—how little it could have been prognosticated from the beautiful tranquillity of the morning—and how changed the whole appearance of things was from that which they had presented in the mirror of the fairy sea, over which the Naiad had so lately skimmed like a swan in

its pride—then wondered if mamma would be very anxious about them—hoped she was looking for them with the telescope, that she might be quite sure they were safe—and longed to have held a white handkerchief to the winds, as a signal of encouragement to her. At last, however, even these lingering remnants of conversation dropped away, and the little group sat, silent and anxious, watching each other's faces, as if they hoped to read there some comfort, which their own views of the case did not supply.

It was very cold, and Mr. Mackenzie made them sit down close together, and wrap his great boat-cloak round and round them, to keep out the cold wind and the spray that was now flying in all directions.

"We are going at a great rate, my dear children," said he, in a cheerful tone, "you have only to keep up your spirits, and exercise a little patience, and we will all be home in good time, and with good appetites for dinner; and then see whether we do not enjoy mamma's bright fire, and her happy welcome, all the more for this cold voyage."

It must be confessed that the minds of the little girls dwelt very wistfully on this inviting picture of the safety and the comfort of home; for by this time they had both become heartily frightened by

the immediate perils which seemed to encompass them. The little Naiad was tossed over the waves so easily, that she seemed perpetually either on the top of a hill, or in the bed of a valley; and when a large wave flung itself against one of her sides, she rocked and staggered with a very terrible motion indeed.

Little Evie became paler and paler, and more still and motionless every moment, till at last she seemed as cold and rigid as a marble statue; and she sat with her eyes fastened on her papa's face, as though her only hopes were in him, and she was determined not to lose sight of him. Flora, on the other hand, became red and pale with every motion of the boat—she trembled excessively, and started with a sort of nameless nervous terror at everything—grasping the gunwale of the little ship, to keep herself steady, and uttering a short little nervous cry every time it made a deeper or longer plunge than usual. There was something strikingly characteristic in the appearance of the two girls: little Evie, prostrate and submissive, and depending upon those she loved best for her chance of safety; Flora, excited and impatient, and striving to work out some refuge for herself, however slender might be the chance of success presented to her.

At last there arose a wild shriek from Flora,

indicative of the utmost agony of fear, yet unaccompanied by any sign or sound from her little companion. A huge wave had broken over the edge of the boat, and half filled it with water.

"Flora, my dear, compose yourself, and come quick and hold this, while Evie and I bale out the water!" said her uncle, in a very anxious tone. "Come, Flora, exert your powers, and show yourself the brave and strong-minded girl I have always thought you—come, dismiss these childish terrors, and assist me to put the boat to rights!" And, more dead than alive, Flora managed to stagger over to the helm, and seat herself according to her uncle's directions; while Evie, perfectly composed, but with the face of a little spirit, opened the hatchway, and handed out the buckets to her papa.

"Now, Flora, mind the rudder!—to the right, child—no, no, no, that is wrong!—to the right—to the right!" and Mr. Mackenzie rushed forward to seize the rudder from her hand, but it was already too late: Flora had lost her presence of mind too much even to distinguish between the right hand and the left; and the boat, which had already edged round considerably while she was taking her place, took a wrong impetus from the nervous motion of her hand. The wind caught the sail in a cross current, and, in half a minute's

time, the little Naiad turned over like a cockle-shell, and Flora, and Evelyn, and Mr. Mackenzie, were all three struggling with the black waters of Loch Lee!

Evelyn sank immediately, and her father dived after her in an agony of terror lest she should have become insensible, but in a moment afterwards he brought her above the water, perfectly collected and quiet. Flora, meanwhile, uttered shriek after shriek, and clung to her uncle's arms and clothes with a pertinacity that almost rendered him powerless.

"Flora, my dear, be quiet, or you will destroy us all!" said her uncle, in a voice of great distress; "command yourself, I entreat of you! I cannot save you both at once; but if you will only do as I desire you, we shall all get safe to shore. Here, Flora, my love, see, hold fast by this part of the boat where I am supporting myself and Evie—cling fast to it, like a good child, till I swim ashore with your little cousin: I must take her first, for she has no strength to sustain herself till I come back. Flora, my child, command yourself, and by the blessing of God I will save you both!"

But Flora either did not hear, or was not in a condition to attend to her uncle's instructions, for she continued to scream and moan in the most

piteous manner, and to overpower her uncle by clutching at his neck and arms.

Mr. Mackenzie was at his wits' end, it was no time to reason in the middle of the raging waters, and with only a precarious hold upon the floating wreck, to keep the whole three from sinking to the bottom.

"Evie! my blessed child! my own darling," exclaimed Mr. Mackenzie, in an agony; "do you think you have strength to sustain yourself by holding on as I am doing just now, for the length of time it will take me to carry Flora ashore and then come back for you?—tell me, my darling, for you see that I cannot free myself from Flora, and I dare not attempt to save you both at once? Rouse yourself, my own Evie, and answer me—do you think I dare venture to leave you?"

"Oh, yes, dear papa," answered little Evie, in a perfectly composed tone, and immediately lifting herself up to assume the position which her papa had pointed out; "go you away with Flora, and God will take care of me till you come back."

"God bless my darling! God support and watch over my precious child!" answered her papa in a tone of thankfulness; he placed a rope round her waist, and fastened it as well as he could to support her, and then struck out towards the shore with Flora between his arms.

These were a few minutes of very terrible solemnity to little Evelyn. She knew that on the force of her own energies hung every chance which remained to her of life, and these she felt becoming every instant feebler and feebler. All sweet thoughts of her dear mamma and her precious home came across her mind, and she felt how probable it was, that the next time she saw that sweet mother, and her dear papa, and Kenneth, and Roderick, and Flora, and Margery, would be where pain and danger could never separate them again,—in heaven; and while this consciousness took possession of her mind, a tranquil and happy calm stole over it, and she lifted up her heart to God, and prayed that He would send down His blessed Spirit to comfort and sustain her mamma and papa under the heavy anguish of losing her, and that it might not be long ere they joined her again before His throne.

What a long, long time it seemed! Her papa appeared to Evie to have had time to swim a dozen times to the shore and come again, yet he was not near her; and she dared not turn her head to see if he were coming. Her legs and the lower part of her body were quite immersed in the water, and began to feel so cold and heavy that her poor little arms, which already ached and trembled with the exertion of holding on, could

not possibly sustain her weight much longer. It was so painful to preserve this position, that Evie once or twice thought of letting go her hold, and thus putting an end to the period of her suffering at once; but then the thought of her dear papa's anguish, if he should return and find that she had sunk, and, moreover, a true and beautiful sense of her duty to God, made little Evelyn see the propriety of preserving her own life as long as He should leave her the means of doing so; and so she braced herself up to continue her painful hold a little longer, though there came a dimness over her eyes, and a feeling of sickness at her heart, which told her, that another long swoon was approaching, and that her exertions would speedily come to a close, without any will of her own.

Just at that moment she heard the gush of the waters beside her, as if somebody were parting them to come towards her. Oh! had God sent her dear papa at last, and would she really be restored to the bosom of her blessed mother after all, in despite of her calm and tranquil expectation of immediate death. A sweet warm rush of returning life brought strength again to her heart. And yet her papa had scarcely *gained* the shore with his burden; for, protracted as his absence had appeared to her, he was still separated by a long half mile of noisy and turbulent water from his

poor little fainting Evie. Yet the plash of the waters continued—somebody certainly was approaching—and the next moment a well-known voice reached her ear:—

"Evie, my darling, are you still alive? Are you still able to speak? Do not give way, dearest Evie, but come with me. Do not allow yourself to faint, my dearest. There, look, Evie, remain here quite quiet between my arms, and let your chin rest upon this one, and we shall be safe and sound upon the shore in a few moments. Bear up, dearest Evie; do not give way yet."

It was the voice of Roderick,—the stoutest swimmer for his years in all Strathlee,—and Evie felt that God in his infinite love had sent him to her preservation. She did in all respects as he directed her; striving to regain some portion of her fleeting strength, that his purpose might not be baffled by her helplessness. She remained perfectly passive, as he desired, not grasping him at all, but allowing him to support her and to hold her chin above the water with his arm. In a very little while, therefore, they approached the shore, where Mr. Mackenzie was watching them in mingled gratitude and anxiety; and as Roderick was as good a swimmer as his uncle, a few more vigorous strokes brought him upon the beach. Then it was, and not till then, when she had been

safely landed, and was clasped in an agony of fondness to the bosom of her dear papa, that Evelyn fainted quite away, and was carried home to her mamma insensible.

The next evening, for the first time, Flora and Evelyn so far recovered the effects of their fright and agitation, as to appear among the circle in the drawing-room to tea. Flo' had entirely regained her looks, but was still somewhat grave and thoughtful, as she sat on a low footstool at her dear aunt's feet; but little Evie, almost as pale as ever, was nestling in her papa's bosom, where he clasped her every now and then with a quick movement, as if to assure himself over and over again that the waters had not devoured her.

The group was exceedingly cheerful, and even talkative, but still there was a touch of chastened and tender quietude diffused over it, produced, no doubt, by the terrors which the whole party had lately undergone. Mamma in particular looked very pale, and her smile, though even sweeter than usual, bore a somewhat unsettled character, as though she had but recently recovered from some unusual excitement; while the boys indulged in a kind of peaceable mirth, quite as gay, but considerably less noisy than usual. Altogether the general mood of the party was an

exceedingly appropriate and characteristic one; for, besides the one great cause for their spirits being chastened and subdued, this was the last night of the holidays, and every one felt that they were on the eve of casting aside the unmingled festivity of the few weeks past, and of returning to the sober and necessary duties of life.

"There is nothing," said Kenneth, in an unusually reflective tone, "there is nothing which reminds me that I shall soon be *growing up* so much, as every return of the holidays. Somehow I think there is always so much that *happens* between every new holidays and the last; and I know such a difference in myself, and everybody else, each time they come round again."

"I am delighted to hear that the flight of time does not pass before you unimproved, my dear boy," answered his father; "I assure you there are very few exercises of the mind more improving than this habit of seizing upon particular seasons, by the lapse of which we have an opportunity of measuring our own progress in wisdom and in virtue. I think the close of these holidays a peculiarly appropriate time for making inquiries of this kind. We have all been unusually busy during the term which preceded them. The presence of Flora, and Roderick, and Hector has given us a much wider sphere at Glenlee than

usual, for the exercise of the social virtues, and the spirit of emulation in our studies. I should be very well pleased to hear the opinions of each of you as to your own progress since the last school-term began, in the acquisition both of knowledge and of virtue."

"Oh! dear uncle," answered Roderick, with a modest and ingenuous readiness, "I have made but a very slender progress indeed; I am but just now beginning to make acquaintance with my own deficiencies both in wisdom and virtue."

"Depend upon it, then, my dear Roderick," returned his uncle, "you have made the most important of all steps towards supplying those deficiencies. There are two great discoveries which must be made by every human being, before he or she can be considered to start fair in the path of virtue: first, the end for which God sent him into this world—and secondly, the means by which he may be able to attain that end. Now I need not tell you, my dearest children, that God sent us all to this earth, that we might use the opportunity of our life here, for the purpose of rendering ourselves fit for that much higher state of society, to which he has promised to elevate us in heaven. And you all know, that to improve our own natures—to enlarge and cultivate our minds—and to discipline and purify our hearts,

form the surest means of rendering ourselves more fit for intercourse with that nobler class of beings with whom we hope, ere long, to associate. I need not tell you, that if we let the powers of our minds lie idle—if we allow our intellects to lie unimproved and waste, we are no better than that wicked and slothful servant, who hid his talent in a napkin, instead of trading with it and doubling its value, like his fellows. Moreover, my dear children, it is a well-known fact, that a field, which is neither ploughed, nor sown, nor dressed by the husbandman, will not long lie fallow, but in a short time will display a plentiful crop of thistles and brambles, where corn and wheat ought to have been waving. In the very same manner, your minds, if they are allowed to lie fallow and unoccupied, will not long present an empty void. Bad propensities and wicked desir es, evil suspicions of your neighbours, and envy, malice, and all uncharitableness towards your fellow-men, will speedily occupy the ground, which, had it been industriously trimmed and cultivated, would have yielded a noble and beautiful harvest to the world as well as to its possessor."

"Do you think, then, uncle, that our improvement in knowledge is certain to secure our improvement in virtue also?" asked Roderick, thoughtfully.

"Yes, my boy, under proper guidance it cannot fail to do so," returned his uncle. "For our progress in both comprehends only this—the improvement of *ourselves*, that we may be rendered more fit to promote the improvement of *others*. There is no virtue, my dear children, which has not the advancement of God's glory for its object; and He has so arranged His providence, that this end cannot be more effectually pursued than in endeavouring to benefit His creatures. I think we have almost succeeded, within the last few months, in proving that our 'Cardinal Virtues' comprehend the entire sum of Human Perfection; and if you will examine them separately, you will find that each is in itself a social virtue. No man can exercise Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance, in the full acceptation of each term, without either directly or indirectly benefiting his neighbour; and thus you perceive that God has made the highest pursuits of man to consist in that endeavour after the improvement of others, as well as of himself, which serves to bind us all by the ties of virtue into one great family. I rejoice to say, my dearest children, that I am sensible of very considerable progress with some of us in the practice of the 'Cardinal Virtues,' and with *all*, of a sincere desire to understand and pursue them."

"Ah, no, dear uncle, not in *all*," interposed

Flora, with a tearful smile; "I know that *I* have not begun as yet almost to understand the nature of virtue, notwithstanding that I have been so many months at Glenlee."

"What, my Flo'! you, whose fortitude and temperance are becoming quite a proverb?" answered her uncle, smiling kindly.

"Oh, uncle, do not affront me by talking of fortitude and temperance," continued Flo', with a look and tone of infinite distress; "there is something quite terrible to myself in remembering the display of selfishness and cowardice which I made yesterday. *You know*, uncle and aunt, that I would rather die myself a thousand times, than be the cause, however innocently, of Evie's death; and that there is no exertion I would not make, when I am mistress of myself, to serve or protect her. And yet, when I remember that through my weakness and want of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, dear Evie, who had so much less bodily strength than I, narrowly escaped being drowned, I feel just as if I were unworthy to look up." And poor Flo' hid her crimson face in her aunt's lap to conceal the tears which were springing in painful and humiliating torrents from her eyes.

"My dearest child, you have totally misjudged this matter," answered her uncle, in a soothing

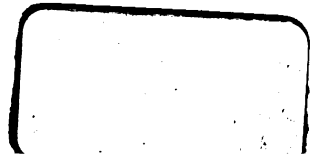
tone, while little Evie slid down, and placed herself on the carpet with her head in Flora's lap. "The nature of fortitude, my Flo', is much more a matter of constitution than you imagine; and although there is no instance in which we may not struggle against its opposite, and even prove successful in the struggle, yet there are many instances,—and your case, yesterday, was one of them,—in which the impulse of Nature is too strong to be overcome, especially, my dear Flo', by one who is as yet only an apprentice to virtue. Your fortitude, my Flora, is the fortitude of *action*—my Evie's is the fortitude of *endurance*, both of them excellent and valuable in their way, and capable of insuring to their possessors a much wider accession of fortitude as the reward of their own endeavours. Do not cloud the joy and the gratitude befitting an escape like that of yesterday, by thoughts so painful nor so gloomy as these, my dear child. God was very good to us all, yesterday, my Flora: He saved the lives of all three when they were in imminent peril; and let us find our happiness, as well as our profit, in believing that He spared them, that we might have further time and opportunity of serving Him on earth, and so render ourselves more fit and more worthy to enjoy Him in heaven. Lift up your face, dearest

Flo', and show me that the discovery of your own deficiencies—even though it be somewhat of an exaggerated one—has had the effect upon you, rather of an incentive for fresh exertions in the future, than of a mortification to embitter the past."

Flora did lift up her face—first kissed Evie with eager and grateful fondness, and then looked up to her uncle and aunt with a smile which seemed to assure them that their kind and judicious counsels—their wise and tender encouragement—was destined to be repaid by complete success.

And now, my own dear little Friends, good bye. If you have accompanied me throughout these volumes with half the pleasure I have felt in leading you—if you say Farewell to me with half the regret which I suffer in my parting from you—if you have followed the little people I have introduced to you through their various adventures with as much enjoyment as I have felt in unfolding them for your benefit, and feel half as much curiosity about the issue as I should have pleasure in gratifying it,—it may happen that, at some future day, we shall look in again together upon the circle at Glenlee, when time shall have begun to exhibit the fruits of his own

influence, and we can better judge how far each member of our little society has succeeded in improving or establishing his individual claims to that rich and valuable distinction which human nature gathers from the practice of the *Cardinal Virtues*.

THE END.

LONDON: HARRISON AND CO., PRINTERS, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.